

Mr. F. B. Chalfont.

# THE STORY of C.F.W. WALTHER

By W. G. POLACK

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## "I Remember the Days of Old"

Psalm 143:5

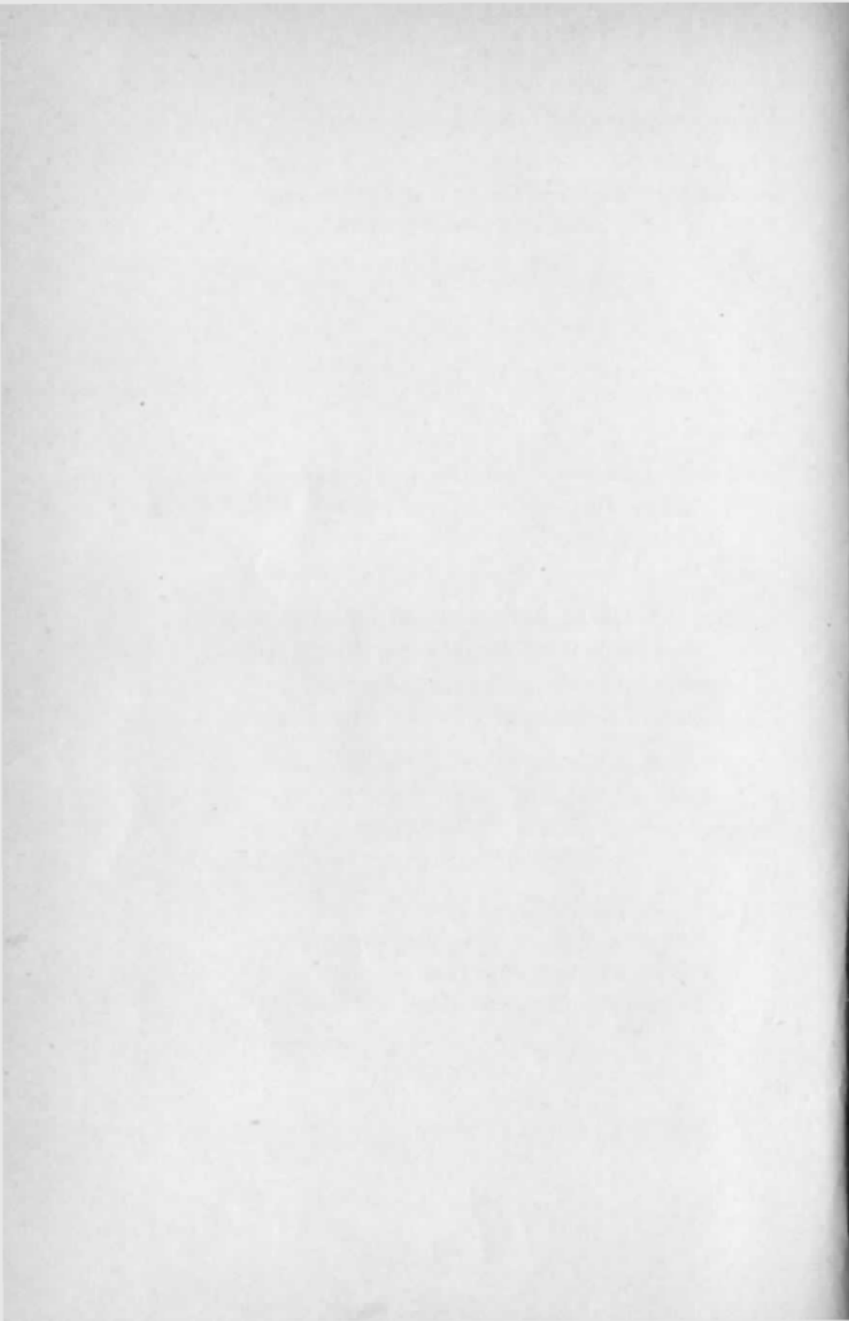
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I will remember, Lord, the days gone by  
And meditate upon the works of old.  
Unto the fathers Thou didst grace supply  
And shower upon them blessings manifold.

Beneath Thy hands they blazed a glorious trail;  
They made the desert blossom like the rose;  
Against enormous odds they did prevail  
Despite the wiles of grim and mighty foes.

To all their blessings I've been made an heir;  
I too may walk the paths the fathers trod  
And in the sunshine of Thy Word may share  
The blessedness of those who walk with God.

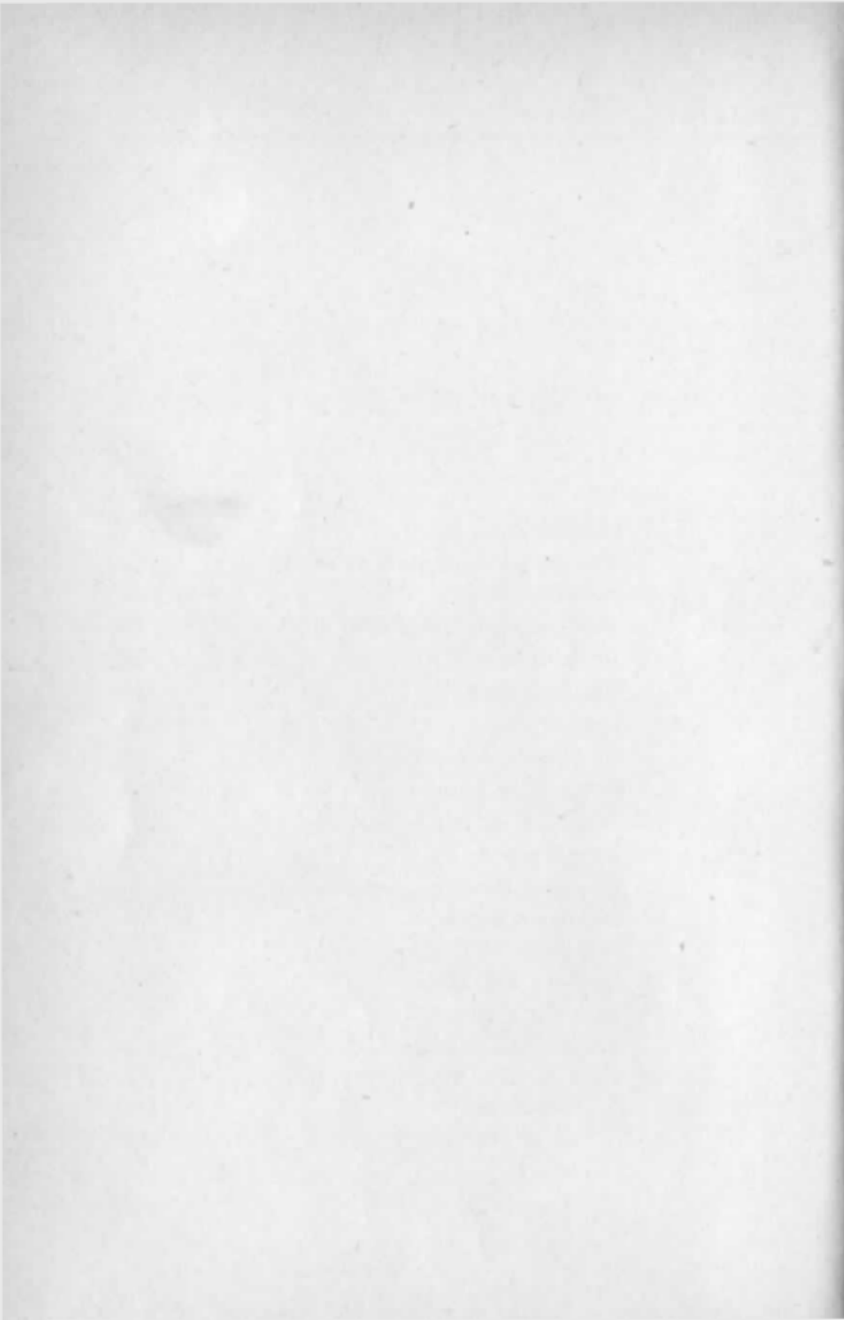
Lord, for this heritage I give Thee praise  
And pray Thee keep my purpose ever true  
To show Thy greatness that in future days  
Those yet unborn Thy grace and love may view.



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THOU on my head in early youth  
didst smile. — H. F. LYTE

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# I

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## CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

*O satisfy us early with Thy mercy that  
we may rejoice and be glad all our days.*  
Psalm 90:14.

CARL FERDINAND WILHELM WALTHER, like Martin Luther, was a Saxon. He was born at Langenchursdorf, a little hamlet near Waldenburg in Saxony, on October 25, 1811. He was a descendant of an old family of ministers. "My great-grandfather," Walther tells us, "Moritz Heinrich Walther of Glatau, near Magdeburg, was pastor at Oberlungwitz from 1719 to 1752. . . . His son, my grandfather, was Adolph Heinrich Walther, . . . since 1763 pastor at Langenchursdorf. . . . My father, Gottlob Heinrich Walther, was pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran church at Langenchursdorf." Accordingly it was in the parsonage of this tiny Saxon *Dorf*, where both his father and his grandfather had

served as pastors, that Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther first saw the light of day and spent his happy childhood years.

Ferdinand was the fourth son and the eighth child in a large family of twelve. His mother was Johanna Wilhelmina, nee Zschenderlein, of Zwickau, Saxony, a woman of noble character, who, together with her husband, believed that a strict rule in the household was essential to the proper Christian training of their little ones. It was a home of culture, and the parents were ready to make whatever sacrifices might be necessary in order to give their children a good education. Walther's father wanted his sons to become real men and had a very strong antipathy against what we today would call a "sissy." He used a little German couplet with which to impress the importance of sturdy manliness upon his sons:

*Ein junger Mensch viel leiden muss,  
 Eh' aus ihm wird ein dominus,*

which may be freely translated:

*A youth must many trials endure  
 Before he can become a Sir.*

However, though the discipline in the home was so strict that the children at times hardly dared to look at their father, it was nevertheless a discipline tempered with a deep affection, as the following incident clearly shows.

It was customary in that part of Saxony at Christmas time for St. Nicholas to visit the homes and to call the children of the household before him to find out whether they had been well behaved, had learned their Catechism and Bible History, and were worthy of being presented with gifts.

## CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

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Every child was expected to give account of himself to St. Nicholas and also to recite a religious stanza of some kind as evidence of his piety. When little Ferdinand was



*The Parsonage of Langenchursdorf in Saxony*

only three years old, he too came under this rule and recited to St. Nicholas the little prayer in verse:

Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness  
My beauty are, my glorious dress,  
Wherein before my God I'll stand  
When I shall reach the heavenly land.

When his father heard the little lad recite this stanza, he was so overjoyed that he gave him a threepenny piece. The incident made a lasting impression on the boy who treasured the stanza throughout life, even when at college



later on his rationalistic training influenced him strongly and threatened to undermine the faith of his childhood.

When Ferdinand became old enough to go to school, he received his first schooling from his father and the village schoolmaster. At the age of eight he attended the town school at Hohenstein, near the city of Chemnitz, for two years. In July, 1821, hardly ten years old, he was enrolled in the *Gymnasium* at Schneeberg, about thirty miles southwest of Hohenstein. It strikes us as strange that a child of ten should be placed in a boarding school at what was then, before the days of modern transportation, a considerable distance from home. In this case, however, the parents no doubt did so chiefly because their son-in-law H. F. W. Schubert was associate director of the Schneeberg *Gymnasium*.

A German *Gymnasium* is a combination of junior and senior high school and junior college in our sense of these terms. Walther showed a fine aptitude for study at Schneeberg, completed his course there with the highest honors, both in deportment and attainments, and was ready for the university shortly before he reached the age of eighteen. Surely an enviable scholastic record.

But what was the state of his soul, and how had his religious life been influenced during these eight years away from home?

All his teachers at college save one were rationalists, as the Liberals and Modernists of that day were called. Rationalism accepted nothing that could not be comprehended by human reason and therefore rejected the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. It was only natural that teachers of this type would not influence their students in the direc-

tion of orthodox Christianity nor strengthen the faith with which they came to the *Gymnasium*. Walther fortunately did not lose his faith in the Holy Scriptures as being God's



*Walther's Father*

revealed Word, but he counted the time he spent there as years in which he was not truly converted.

In one of his lectures at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, about sixty years later, he spoke of his spiritual condition at this time in the following words:

"By accepting the Holy Scriptures as truly God's Word because he was so taught by his parents, namely, through a purely human belief in them, no man becomes righteous



*Walther's Mother*

before God and is saved. Nevertheless such a purely human belief is also an inexpressibly great treasure, yea, a very dear, precious gift of the prevenient grace of God. I may

in this regard present myself to you as an example. My dear God-fearing father had taught me from earliest childhood that the Bible is God's Word. But I had to leave my father's house very early, in my eighth year, to live in unbelieving circles. I did not lose the historical faith. Like an angel of God it accompanied me through life. But during those more than eight years of *Gymnasium* life I was unconverted." On another occasion he declared: "I was eighteen years old when I left the *Gymnasium*, and I had never had a Bible nor a Catechism, but a miserable manual, which contained heathen morality."

As in the case of Martin Luther, God, who had in mind to use this talented young man for a special work in His Church, was to lead him carefully through the school of experience and mold him into an instrument fit for His purposes.

At this time Walther had no intention of entering the ministry. He had outstanding musical abilities and loved music with all his heart. He therefore wrote in his diary: "I feel that I was born for nothing but music." However, when he mentioned this to his father, he was told bluntly: "If you wish to become a musician, you will have to shift for yourself; but if you will study theology, I shall give you a thaler a week."

God, too, did not want Walther to become a professional musician, and in His own way He led him into the work that was to be his life's calling.

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My life is but a weaving  
Between my Lord and me.  
I cannot choose the colors  
Nor all the pattern see;  
Sometimes He chooseth sorrow,  
And I in foolish pride  
Forget He sees the upper  
And I the under side.

Not till the loom is silent  
And the shuttles cease to fly,  
Will He reveal the pattern  
Or tell the reason why  
The dark threads are as needful  
In the weaver's skillful hand  
As the threads of gold and silver  
In the pattern He has planned.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

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## 2

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### THE YOUNG STUDENT OF THEOLOGY

*Thus saith the Lord God, . . . I will remember My covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant.*  
Ezek. 16:59, 60.

THREE years before Walther's graduation from the Schneeberg *Gymnasium* a man had died whose remarkable career had called forth the admiration of the Christian world. This was the Lutheran divine Jean Frederic Oberlin, who had spent his entire ministerial life at Ban-de-la-Roche, in the desolate Steintal region of the Vosges Mountains in Alsace. Under severe difficulties and intense hardships he

had labored for the spiritual welfare, the moral improvement, and the economic and social elevation of an obscure and degraded people. He established a patriarchal government and led the people to improve the physical condition of the region; roads were built, bridges erected, and better dwellings constructed; hospitals were founded and marked advances made in agriculture. For the children he introduced primary and Sunday schools; libraries were established, Bible societies founded, and a zeal for missions was instilled. At one time Oberlin contemplated emigrating to America. He had read of the spiritual destitution of the Lutherans in the Colonies and planned to come over to help them. To his great disappointment he was prevented from carrying out this design by the outbreak of the War of Independence. When he died in 1826, he left a remarkable letter of farewell to his people, from which we quote the following earnest words:

"God will neither forget nor forsake thee, my dear parish. He has towards thee, as I have often said, thoughts of peace and mercy. All things will go well with thee. Only cleave to Him. Forget my name and retain only the name of Jesus Christ, whom I have proclaimed to thee. He is thy Pastor; I am but His servant. He is the good Master, who sent me to thee that I might be useful. He alone is wise, good, and almighty; I am but a poor, fallen, wretched man. Pray, my friends, that you may all become the beloved sheep of His pasture. There is salvation in none other than in Jesus Christ. Jesus loves you, seeks you, and is ready to receive you. Go to Him just as you are, with all your sins and infirmities. He alone can deliver you from

them and heal you. He will sanctify and perfect you. Consecrate yourselves to Him. Whenever any of you die, may you die in Him, and may I meet you, with songs of triumph, in the mansions of the blessed, before the throne of the Lamb."

It so happened that during the weeks following Walther's graduation from the *Gymnasium*, Ferdinand's elder brother, Otto Hermann Walther, was at home on a vacation. He had completed two years of theology at the University of Leipzig. Otto Hermann brought along a number of new tracts and books, and among these was the life of Oberlin by G. H. Schubert. This book particularly interested Ferdinand, and Oberlin's sterling example of piety and self-sacrificing labors filled his heart with the desire to study theology and to become a minister of the Gospel. He wrote in his diary: "I live quite happily and philosophize with my brother about the interesting events of our lives, and I am reading with real hunger the biography of Pastor Oberlin by Schubert; this has filled my whole being and shown me that the future of a theologian is the finest, because he may, if he only will, create for himself a field of activity such as no one who chooses another calling may ever hope for. The anxious question 'Will you some day be able to provide for yourself?' is now completely put aside; for I have been imbued by the reading of this precious book with an unshakable trust in God and with a firm faith in His providence and its workings upon our destiny after I saw it awakened through the conversations with my dear, good brother."

As a result we find Ferdinand entering the University of Leipzig at the end of October, 1829, for the purpose of

taking up the study of theology. The promised thaler a week was forthcoming from his father. Because of his fine record at the *Gymnasium* he was supplied with a cord of firewood from another source. But this was hardly enough to begin to take care of his needs. By giving private lessons, he managed to get enough to cover expenses, but he had to live very frugally. There was little money left for books. In fact, he did not even have a Bible of his own, a lack that is hard to explain; but his new spiritual life, awakened by Oberlin's stirring faith life, made him anxious to have a copy of the Sacred Volume. But where get the money to buy one? He had only a few farthings in his purse. If he spent these for a Bible, how would he get the food to eat on the morrow? Finally this argument convinced him: "I am spending the money for God's Word; He will provide for me and not permit me to suffer want." He then bought an inexpensive copy of the Holy Scriptures.

On the following day Ferdinand had a visitor from home, a peasant from Langenchursdorf, who told him that, before coming to Leipzig, he had stopped at the parsonage and asked his father if he had any message for young Ferdinand. At first the father had replied negatively; then, after a moment's thought, he had handed him a letter for his son. When Ferdinand opened the letter, he found a thaler in it! God had provided for him, and his faith in the divine promises was greatly strengthened. He read his Bible faithfully and soon made up his deficiencies in Biblical knowledge. On December 9 he made this entry in his diary: "Today I read in the Bible, namely, in the Book of Acts, in order, first of all, to become more at home in it—



for I know very little about the Apostles, and I can hardly repeat their twelve names — and then to edify myself with the examples of the effects and evidences of an immovable faith.”

Walther remained a lifelong student of the Bible, and his influence in behalf of a true, Biblical Christianity was to be far-reaching. One of his private pupils paid him this tribute: “To Walther I owe my salvation. Before coming to him, I did not know that I was a sinner; I knew nothing of Christ and His grace, nothing of the Bible. To my present dear teacher I am indebted for all this. I, a poor, weak, sinful human being, am unable to repay him, but God will certainly reward him for leading a soul heavenward.”

The uppermost prayer in the heart of the young student of theology at that time, no doubt, was to be led aright and to be taught well, so that he might be able to serve others, a prayer beautifully expressed by Frances Ridley Havergal in the words:

O lead me, Lord, that I may lead  
The wandering and the wavering feet;  
O feed me, Lord, that I may feed  
Thy hungering ones with manna sweet.

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JUST as I am, though tossed about  
With many a conflict, many a doubt,  
Fightings and fears within, without,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

CHARLOTTE ELLIOTT

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3

## NEW FRIENDS

*Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him.*  
James 1:12.

SOME time before Ferdinand Walther's matriculation at the University of Leipzig his brother Otto Hermann and a number of other students of the university had formed a little club, a sort of "holy club," for the purpose of mutual edification through Scripture reading, prayer, and discussion of religious questions and problems. This group was opposed to the Rationalism prevalent at the university among both professors and students. Pious laymen of Leipzig encouraged the members of the club, of whom a certain Candidate Kuehn (died August 24, 1832), a very remarkable man, was the leader. Other members of the circle besides Walther's brother were J. F. Buenger, Ottomar Fuerbringer, Theodore Brohm, and E. G. W. Keyl, all of whom afterwards played leading parts in the founding of the Missouri Synod and in the prosecution of its work. Ferdinand Walther was received into the club, and the friendships knitted there were of lifelong duration.

We can best glean Walther's own reactions from his description of the activity of this group. In his biography of J. F. Buenger he wrote:

"This little group of spiritually awakened students met on certain days each week for common prayer and for the purpose of reading the Scriptures for their personal edification, and of discussing, and exchanging views on, the one thing needful. For a time Prof. F. W. Lindner, a believing member of the Leipzig faculty, privately conducted a so-called *collegium philobiblicum*, in which he explained the Scriptures to these students and directed them in the art of practical sermonizing.

"Naturally these believers, who had withdrawn from the world, had to bear much scorn and contempt. They were called mystics, pietists, sanctimonious fellows, obscurantists, bigots, and other names even less flattering. Hated by some as contemptible hypocrites or pitied as unfortunate, deluded religious enthusiasts, they were cast out by the unbelieving world and to some extent also by their own kinsfolk. They, however, were filled with an inner joy in their God and Savior, and all those who remained faithful ever afterwards looked back upon this time of their first love as the most blessed period of their lives.

"At first there was in this circle no discussion of the doctrinal differences among the various churches, although the faith which had been kindled in their hearts through the study of the Bible was none other than the Lutheran faith. In the course of time, however, a change came about. . . . Candidate Kuehn, who had come to a full assurance of faith only after long and severe anguish and conflicts, under un-

speaking terrors of the Law, now endeavored to lead the little awakened group in the same path over which God had led him. He tried to convince us that our Christianity could never rest upon a firm foundation until we too had experienced the keenest sorrow for sin and the very terrors of hell in bitter struggles of repentance. The result was a general change from an evangelically joyful to a legalistically gloomy Christianity."

The devotional literature used in their meetings was therefore chiefly of the pietistic kind, which urged a religion of the emotions and practical benevolence, without sufficient regard for purity of doctrine.

"The less," writes Walther, "a book invited to faith, and the more legalistically it urged contrition of heart and total mortification of the old man *preceding* conversion, the better a book we held it to be. And even these books we read only as far as they described the sorrows and exercises of repentance; when this was followed by a description of faith and comfort for the penitent, we usually closed such a book; for we thought that did not as yet concern us."

Now Ferdinand Walther, who had come to the university with no more than an outward veneer of Christianity, began to experience serious doubts, and terrible conflicts distressed his soul. It was then that he and Buenger, who was similarly troubled, were drawn more closely together, and together after a time found again the sure consolation of the Gospel. Walther no doubt was describing his own state of mind also when he wrote of his friend Buenger: "He also not only gave himself, body and soul, to his Lord and Savior, but soon afterwards also fell into great distress

of conscience, the same as a few others of his student friends and brethren in faith. Like these he now tortured himself day and night in the effort to reach the highest possible degree of penitence and contrition, without, however, being able to attain that goal."



*F. W. Barthel*

It was during this time that the one home in Leipzig open to Walther and his friends, where they were understood and appreciated, proved to be a true haven of refuge and strength. This was the pious home of a Christian family named Barthel. The head of this household, F. W. Barthel, later served as the first Treasurer of the Missouri Synod. When Mrs. Barthel passed away in 1881, Walther preached her funeral sermon, in which he spoke with deep feeling of the

events at that time and publicly expressed his gratitude for the kindness bestowed on him in his youth.

The home of the Barthel family was like that described by Spitta in his immortal hymn:

O happy home where each one serves Thee lowly,  
Whatever his appointed work may be,  
Till every common task seems great and holy  
When it is done, O Lord, as unto Thee!

Walther himself describes it in these words: "I saw a truly Christian family, in which Jesus was all in all, in which the Word of God was the daily food and drink of the souls and

wielded its scepter, in which the Lord was served unceasingly, and in which therefore the heavenly peace of Jesus was poured out on all members of the family. Thus I here found my spiritual parents, a father in Christ and a mother in Christ, who now, spiritually and bodily, cared for me as for a son.

"Just at that time, however, I was severely afflicted spiritually, was famished in body and soul, and, uncertain of my salvation, wrestled with despair. Praying, sighing, crying, fasting, struggling, was of no avail; God's peace was gone from my soul. Terrified by the Law, this stanza rang in my heart day and night:

"This my care is where I go  
That I do not seem to know  
If I am a Christian true,  
If Thou art my Jesus, too.

"It was then particularly that Mrs. Barthel took me to her motherly heart. Then, as often as I crossed her threshold, her lips not only ran over with words of evangelical comfort for me, but she also wrestled day and night for me in fervent intercession with God. And, lo! God heard her pleading. I finally had peace in Christ, and so a tie of blessed fellowship with Christ bound us that nothing could sever until her death."

Such expressions of gratitude spoken fifty years after the events referred to show how serious the situation was for the earnest young theologian and how deeply he appreciated the kind help and godly counsel given him by this pious woman.

About the same time another person entered into Ferdinand Walther's life and wielded a mighty influence upon

him. This was the Rev. Martin Stephan of Dresden. During the period of his spiritual trials and struggles Walther had sought the advice of pastors in or near Leipzig; but these rationalists knew not how to deal with his trouble. They and others directed his attention to Stephan at Dresden, who had the reputation of being an excellent pastor and a Lutheran of the old school. Since Walther could not go to visit Stephan, he asked his advice by letter. He waited impatiently for the reply, and when it came, he was afraid to open the letter lest it contain only false comfort. So he first knelt in prayer and then broke the seal. Upon reading the letter, he was transported, as it were, out of the depths of hell into heaven, so sweet and positive were the words of solace with which Martin Stephan assured him that also his sins were forgiven through the atoning blood of Christ. Walther had now truly found his Savior, and the peace of God that passeth all understanding filled his heart. He had made new friends, good friends, but, most important of all, he had found the best Friend, Jesus Christ, his Lord and Savior.

Looking back the way we've come,  
What a sight, O Lord, we see!  
All the failures in ourselves,  
All the love and strength in Thee.  
Yet it seemed so dark before —  
Would that we had trusted more!

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MAKE me a captive, Lord,  
And then I shall be free;  
Force me to render up my sword,  
And I shall conqueror be.  
I sink in life's alarms  
When by myself I stand;  
Imprison me within Thine arms,  
And strong shall be my hand.

GEORGE MATHESON

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## THE CANDIDATE OF THEOLOGY

*Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep Thy righteous judgments.*

Psalm 119:105, 106.

Not long after Walther's spiritual healing he was stricken with bodily illness — consumption. He was forced to give up his studies at the university for a time and spent about six months at home. In a letter to his brother he describes the medicine to which, under God, he ascribed his cure:

“You want the remedy for consumptives? It is this: Take fresh, unsalted goat butter, six spoonfuls; melt it and mix well with three spoonfuls of honey; stir until the butter is curdled; take a tablespoonful in the morning on an empty



stomach and in the evening shortly before retiring; continue for several months. Avoid sour things, pray God for improvement, and shortly you will be cured of consumption."

During these months of enforced inactivity Walther took up the reading of Martin Luther's writings, which he found in his father's library. His heart had been prepared for Luther by his spiritual trials, and he now realized for the first time how firmly and thoroughly the writings of Luther and the teachings of the Lutheran Church were grounded on, and anchored in, the infallible and inspired Word of God. His motto from now on was: "Back to Luther!" Henceforth his heart was aglow with a burning zeal for the saving truth of God's Word as it had been brought to light again by Luther and formulated in the noble Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

We may say that this experience marked the turning point in Walther's life and helped to shape his future career, and it left its imprint upon the synod he afterwards helped to organize here in America. Dr. H. H. Walker in his essay "Walther the Luther of America" summarizes Walther's attitude toward the Scriptures in these words:

"Walther's position was this: Whatever the Bible declares to be the truth, that is the truth, though the whole world may declare it to be false; on the other hand, whatever the Bible declares to be false and erroneous, that is false and erroneous, though the whole world, yea, an angel from heaven, declare it to be correct and true. He did not allow human reason and intellect to sit in judgment upon, or correct, a truth revealed in the Scriptures. He did not follow church traditions nor listen to alleged new revelations. The

Bible alone, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible in theology — that was Walther's position in regard to the Bible.

"Therefore also as to interpreting the Scriptures his principle was: Scripture is to be explained by Scripture; in other words, the Holy Spirit speaking to us in the Scriptures must explain Himself, must be His own Interpreter, just as every man must be, and is, the best interpreter of his own words.

"Whether a so-called fundamental doctrine of the Holy Scriptures or a so-called non-fundamental doctrine was under discussion, Walther never would depart from the Word as he found it written in the Holy Scriptures. Let me quote a few sentences from one of his sermons. Speaking of Christ's temptation by the devil and Christ's repeated answer, 'It is written,' 'It is written again,' Walther exclaims: 'O great, important, golden, heavenly, eternal words of the Son of God! Oh, that these words could be written in the firmament in fiery letters, so that all men, all heretics, all doubters, all unbelievers, all sorrowing hearts, all sinners, would have to read them daily! Oh, that these words could be inscribed upon the hearts of all men with iron pencils and with indelible letters! Oh, hear it, ye who still are doubting whether the Word of God in the Old and New Testaments be the Word of the living God! Hear and consider: when the Son of God was tempted by the power of Satan, then He merely said, "It is written," and with these few words from the Scriptures of the Old Testament He demolished all the entrenchments and bulwarks of the hellish spirit. How could Christ have proved more clearly

and more incontrovertibly to all the world that the Bible is the everlasting Word of Him who made heaven and earth, that this Word shall stand firm and immovable when all, all shall pass away?' Yes, Walther trembled at the Word of God; therefore God did to him what He had promised, saying, 'To this man will I look, even to him that . . . trembleth at My Word,' Is. 66:2. From the Word of God in the Bible, Walther absolutely refused to depart in the least; on it he stood firm and immovable as a true son of Luther. This is what made him invincible."

After Easter, 1832, Walther returned to Leipzig to complete his studies; but he must have been very weak bodily, because he wrote his friend Ottomar Fuerbringer that he had no hope of ever being physically able to take up the active work of the ministry. Later, looking back upon these times of spiritual and physical sickness, he saw in them the hand of a loving Father in heaven, who was preparing him for his future work in the Church. "For whom God would use in His kingdom He first causes to be undone in order that he may be nothing but an empty instrument, so that he and all Christians must declare: 'Not this poor, powerless sinner, but God Himself has performed this work.'"

When he had finished his course at the university, Walther returned to his home to prepare for his examinations. The first of these, the examination for the license to preach, was taken in September, 1833. According to the custom of the time the second examination for the taking of holy orders could not be given until two years after the first. In the meantime Walther sought a position as tutor; but not until Easter, 1834, did he obtain a place. It was in the

home of Friedemann Loeber at Kahla, in Altenburg. This was the eldest brother of the Rev. G. H. Loeber, who came to America with the Saxons in 1839. At the time G. H. Loeber was pastor at Eichenberg, near Kahla, and a warm friendship between Pastor Loeber and Walther was knitted during the months of the latter's tutorship at Kahla.

Walther's service in the home of Friedemann Loeber continued until November, 1836; and his employer tried to make it pleasant and agreeable for him. One phase of his relationship to F. Loeber, Walther later related in detail:

"When I was still tutor in Kahla in 1834, I occasionally disputed with my principal on the question whether everything in the Bible is trustworthy, divine truth. My principal was not at all antagonistic to Christianity, but in his youth he had imbibed many rationalistic ideas, which had not been entirely eradicated. He held, for instance, that what the Bible said about the stars was only the personal opinion of Moses, that it had not been inspired by the Holy Spirit. He therefore believed that the stars were not mere luminous bodies, but inhabited by similar creatures as our earth. My efforts to change his mind were in vain. One day he came into my room with a beaming countenance, holding a newspaper in his hands, and said: 'My dear Candidate, you are beaten. I have just read in this paper that the great astronomer Herschel, Jr., who went to Africa at the beginning of this year, has by means of a huge telescope discovered manlike creatures on the moon. Read it for yourself.' I did so, and the paper actually contained the account as told by my principal. But I then replied: 'Beg pardon, my dear principal, but I hope you do not believe

that? Indeed, I declare that, if I myself would look through that telescope and see manlike creatures running around on the moon, I should not believe it; I should hold that these ostensible human beings must be in the telescope.' My principal thereupon said: 'I fully realize that nothing can be done with you!' and impatiently left the room."

Walther then relates that about a half year later the newspaper retracted the article because it had been prepared by an impostor as a hoax and that the famous Herschel had never written it!

Walther left the home of the Loebers in November, 1836. He passed his second examination at Dresden before the high consistory and thus became a full-fledged candidate of theology. He was twenty-five years old at the time.

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Nor his the dreamer's lot, idly to dwell  
In pleasant fields, far from the strifes of men  
Who vex their souls with trifling why and when  
And in the marts of Fame their conscience sell.  
Nay, he had drunk from life's pure, sparkling well  
And felt the rapture of the life divine  
And, with his eyes anointed, beheld the shrine  
Of God's great glory, which he fain must tell.

GEORGE E. TACK

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5

## IN THE MINISTRY

*Thus said the Lord God: Behold, I, even I, will both search My sheep and seek them out. — And I will give you pastors according to Mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. Ezek. 34:11; Jer. 3:15.*

CARL FERDINAND WILHELM WALTHER was called to serve the Lutheran congregation at Braeunsdorf, near Penig, Saxony, at the instance of Count von Einsiedel, the patron of that territory, who had the hereditary right to choose a pastor for the people who lived on his estates. The Count von Einsiedel was a devout Christian, who had the welfare of his people at heart. He must have known Walther, at least by reputation, and evidently felt that he would be the kind of minister the Braeunsdorf congregation needed. Walther described his journey to his new field of

labor and all the attending circumstances of his coming to Braeunsdorf in an interesting letter to the count.

His ordination had been set for January 15, 1837, but at the urgent invitation of the people he came to Braeunsdorf already on January 10. More than a hundred of his parishioners came to Langenchursdorf to escort their pastor to his new home. A still larger number, together with the village schoolmaster and his pupils, met him at the boundary of Braeunsdorf to welcome him. At the parsonage the schoolmaster delivered a formal address of welcome, to which the pastor-elect made a suitable reply, expressing his gratitude.

Walther was very much concerned at the time about his ordination. Because he knew that the church superintendent under whose jurisdiction he was to labor was a rationalist, Walther greatly feared that his ordination would not be performed according to the orthodox Lutheran rite, but in accordance with the unchristian formula commonly in use in Saxony. Much to his joy, however, all went better than he had anticipated. After confession, absolution, and reception of the Lord's Supper the superintendent ordained him "according to the practice of our and the Apostolic Church, so that by the same not only the proper obligation was laid on me, but there was also given to me in the name of the Triune God the power and the authority to preach the Gospel, to wield the power of the keys, and to administer the holy Sacraments according to Christ's institution."

Walther was happy also because his aged father, his brother Otto Hermann, his brother-in-law E. G. W. Keyl, and some other friends were present to assist at his ordination, who, he said, "with laying on of hands out of full hearts spoke the words of consecration over me."

## IN THE MINISTRY

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His inaugural sermon was a frank declaration of what he held to be his duty as a Lutheran minister. His text was Jer. 1:6-8: "Then said I, Ah, Lord God, behold, I cannot speak; for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces; for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord." In his introduction he says that the consideration of the great importance and the difficulties of the ministerial office, the thought that he will one day have to render an account before God, and the feeling of his own weakness and inability weighs heavily upon his soul; but he takes courage and rejoices for three reasons: first, because he comes not by his own choice, but by God's call; secondly, because he comes not with his own wisdom, but with God's Word; and thirdly, because he comes, trusting not in his own power, but in God's help.

His ministry at Braeunsdorf proved to be a trying one, not so much on account of the labors and difficulties involved in serving his congregation, which was in a deplorable condition, as on account of the activities of the church authorities in Saxony, who opposed Walther's orthodoxy at every opportunity and put his faith and steadfastness to a severe test.

The poor people at Braeunsdorf had long been spiritually neglected. They had not heard the true Gospel for years. A living faith and an active spiritual life were almost unknown. The ignorance both in secular and religious matters was appalling. The prevailing sins were lewdness, desecration of the holy day, drunkenness, shamelessness, and



rudeness. The religious instruction in the school was a mere moralizing, "a curious mixture of truth and error," as Walther said. The hymnal in use was leavened with rationalism, as were also the schoolbooks. The prescribed prayers in the Book of Forms were of such a character that a believing pastor could use them neither in public nor in private. Walther's strictly orthodox practice soon aroused hostility. His main enemies were the superintendent of the district and his own schoolmaster. Being rationalists, both hated the young pastor on account of his firm Lutheran stand in doctrine and practice. To counteract his influence, the superintendent and the schoolmaster combined against him, the former as a persecutor, the latter as a spy and informer.

Repeatedly Walther deviated from the prescribed forms in his services. When this fact was reported by the schoolmaster to the superintendent, the latter instituted legal proceedings against him, the costs of which Walther was obliged to pay.

In a sermon preached before the superintendent, Walther had made the statement that death came into the world by the fall of Adam. The superintendent censured him for this, calling it an outworn fable. The young pastor then reminded his superior that he himself had only a year before by oath pledged him to the Lutheran Confessions, which taught this doctrine. The superintendent replied: "You were pledged, not to the letter, but to the spirit of the Confessions." When Walther denied this and added that the Scriptures plainly state: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," the superintendent

countered: "That means spiritual death." Walther, however, promptly rejoined: "But does not God immediately after the Fall say to Adam, 'Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return'?" The superintendent had nothing further to say, but his animosity against Walther continued as before.

What saddened Ferdinand Walther during this period of opposition and persecution was that his own father was not in sympathy with his son's outspoken fidelity to orthodox Lutheranism, because he feared it would ruin his opportunities for advancement in the Church.

Walther's experiences, however, were not isolated ones. His friends of the university days, Buenger, Brohm, Fuerbringer, and others, were being opposed in a similar manner in their respective fields. Nor were the faithful Lutheran pastors the only ones who felt the unjust oppression of the State Church. Many pious lay members went to great pains to hear a soundly Lutheran sermon. "Many of them," Walther wrote, "after having labored the whole week from early dawn until late at night in the sweat of their face to earn their meager daily bread for their own households, set out on foot at the approach of Sunday, soon after midnight, in order to refresh their famishing hearts with the preaching of the pure Word of God in some distant church. When this was done, they set out at once, on Sunday evening, for the return home with rejoicing and on Monday, refreshed in soul, again took up the weekly task which so meagerly supported them and their own."

These faithful pastors and laymen would gladly have made heavy sacrifices in order to organize a "free church,"

separated from the rationalistic State Church; but they were not permitted to do so. As long as they remained in their fatherland, they were perforce required to retain membership in the corrupt, despotic established Church.

It is not at all surprising therefore that these oppressed Lutherans sighed for relief and cast their eyes across the Atlantic to America, where, as they had heard, everyone was free to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience and where the government exercised no authority over the religious beliefs of its citizens.

Emigration was finally decided upon as the only correct and proper means to "escape from the oppression of conscience, which constantly grew more and more unbearable and which threatened to suffocate in them all life of faith," as Walther summarized the situation.

Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,  
Pilgrim through this barren land.  
I am weak, but Thou art mighty;  
Hold me by Thy powerful hand.

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IN God's dear name we wend our way;  
His angels lead by night and day  
As they led Israel long ago  
From Egypt's shores and Pharaoh:  
Lord, our God, have mercy.

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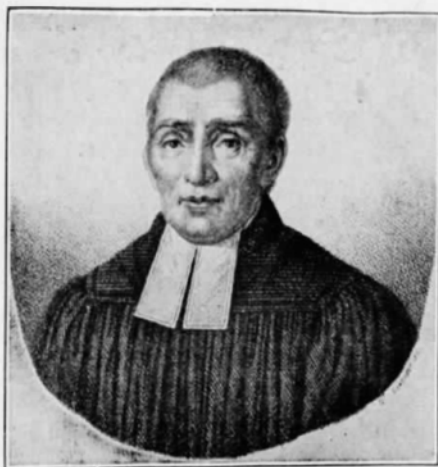
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## THE EMIGRANT

*And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of My people, . . . and I am come to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.*  
Ex. 3:7, 8.

IN the troubles that Walther was passing through at this time he was again brought together with the man who had given him such comforting counsel in the days of his sore spiritual distress and had helped to lead him to the certainty of salvation in Christ the Savior — the Rev. Martin Stephan, pastor of the Bohemian St. John's Church in Pirna, a suburb of Dresden. Martin Stephan was the outstanding advocate of true Lutheranism in all Saxony at the time. He, too, on account of the attacks and opposition that rose

up against him, had begun to think seriously of leading a group of confessional Lutherans to America. Stephan's position in religion had given many scattered individuals, pastors, theological candidates, and laymen the confidence to look to him for leadership. Walther, in his *Life of J. F. Buenger*, quotes from some of Stephan's printed sermons to



Martin Stephan

show his staunch orthodoxy. In one of them Stephan said: "What I have preached I myself believe with my whole heart. I am firmly convinced that only the Bible can be a fountain of pure Christian doctrine. Out of this our pious forefathers have drawn and preserved the pure doctrine in the confessional

writings of our Evangelical Lutheran Church for us." When Walther was warned against Stephan by a man who did not share his confidence in him, he asked, "Shall I desert the man who by the grace of God has saved my soul?"

Therefore, when Martin Stephan, in the year 1838, issued a call for emigration to all whose consciences were op-

pressed by the existing religious conditions, Walther was among the number of those who responded. So was his brother Otto Hermann, his friend Buenger, and many others. Walther resigned his charge with a bleeding heart and on the 16th Sunday after Trinity, 1838, delivered his farewell sermon to a weeping congregation. A bond of strong affection had been welded between pastor and people, and even his opponents had learned to know him as an honest and upright man, who sought their welfare.

In the "Regulations for Emigrants," drawn up under Stephan's direction by a committee, the cause, purpose, and aim of the emigration were stated as follows:

"After calm and deliberate consideration the emigrants can see no possibility of maintaining their faith pure and unadulterated in their present home and of preserving it for their descendants. Hence they are constrained in their consciences to emigrate and to seek a country in which the Lutheran faith is not placed in jeopardy, where they can serve God according to His revealed order of grace, and where they may enjoy, without interference, the means of grace in their integrity and purity and preserve the means of grace pure and unadulterated for their descendants. These means of grace include: the office of the ministry, with full and free exercise of its duties, pure forms of worship, unadulterated preaching of the divine Word, the Sacraments in the original form, and the cure of souls unhampered in its ministrations. A country of this character is the United States of America, where complete religious and civic liberty is maintained in a measure unknown elsewhere and where such liberty is guarded against foreign

interference. The States we have chosen as the goal of the emigration and hence as our new home."

During the months of October and November, 1838, the many preparations necessary for such an emigration were completed, and five ships were chartered to convey the emigrants and their goods to the New World. On November 3 the first ship to leave, the *Copernicus*, weighed



*St. Johanneskirche, Dresden, Where Stephan was Pastor*

anchor. The others, the *Johann Georg*, the *Republik*, the *Olbers*, and the *Amalia*, followed in the course of the month. Walther sailed on the *Johann Georg*.

We can get a fair picture of what ocean travel was like in those days from the following entries of a diary kept by G. Guenther, one of the passengers on the *Olbers*, the ship that carried Martin Stephan and Otto Hermann Walther across the ocean:

"November 18, 10 o'clock A. M., the wind being favorable, the *Olbers* weighed anchor. Its journey was so rapid that within forty hours we were outside the Strait of Dover, a rare achievement, as Captain Henry Exter informed us. Seasickness began its ravages and brought a great deal of confusion into the ship. On November 20 death took its first victim among the emigrants. The little son of Dr. M-ch [Marbach], a child of three years, died of heart failure. Since this was the first death on board the *Olbers*, the captain, actuated also by the official standing of the child's father, made an exception regarding the usual method of burial at sea. The ship's carpenter built a little coffin, and in this the remains of the beloved child were solemnly committed to the dark grave in the waves. The Rev. M. Stephan delivered a touching address. And, indeed, the moment was a heartrending one as the unhappy parents, gazing after the beloved one into the foaming sea, stood at the balustrade of the ship—they were not even privileged to give vent to their grief at some green mound in the churchyard. The *Olbers* sailed on, and in the evening twilight, like spirit music, the cradlesong of the exiles,



composed by Otto Hermann Walther, was wafted across the waves:

“Now rest, my child, and slumber;  
No cares thy bed encumber,  
But angels undefiled!  
Our ship is still a-sailing,  
Our pilot true, unfailing,  
Is Christ, the dear and holy Child.

“On December 4 a favorable wind filled the sails of the *Olbers*, and on the same day the ship passed from the Bay of Biscay into the Atlantic Ocean. The crew had stored the casks of drinking water in the lower hold of the ship, and since fresh water was now needed, all freight stored in the steerage had to be moved, which caused considerable annoyance to the passengers. Wednesday, December 5, when we were in a dead calm, the Rev. O. H. Walther commenced Advent devotions. In the evening there was a song service with prayer. This became the regular order of the day. The old Chemnitz and Breslau hymnals and also the *Songs of the Exiles* were used. On special occasions Pastor Walther composed suitable poems. As the number of hymnals did not suffice, the minister read to the congregation the verses to be sung. Whenever the weather was moderate, the services were conducted on the upper deck, a suitable place for these solemn acts, as there was nothing there to distract the attention of the congregation.

“Provision was made for the schooling of the children. They were instructed almost every day by one or the other of the ministerial candidates.

“Wednesday, December 19, the two-year-old boy of the miller Zeibig died of teething trouble, and the remains of the child were committed to the waves the same evening.

# Johann Georg.

No.	Name	Stand	Hohnore	Alter
1.	Layme G. W. P. Engl ...	Wohnort	Engl	35.
2.	Wohnort ...	Engl ...	"	22.
3.	Wohnort ...	Engl ...	"	14.
4.	L. P. W. Engl ...	Engl ...	Engl ...	26.
5.	Wohnort ...	Engl ...	"	23.
6.	Wohnort ...	Engl ...	Engl ...	35.
7.	Wohnort ...	Engl ...	Engl ...	49.
8.	Wohnort ...	Engl ...	"	13.
9.	Wohnort ...	Engl ...	"	

Part of Passenger List of the "Johann Georg"

The burial services were conducted by the Rev. O. H. Walther.

"Tuesday, December 25, on Christmas Day, we had very warm weather. While in our childhood home Frost was painting his flowers on the windowpanes, a sultry summer heat prevailed on the *Olbers*. On the following Monday, New Year's Eve, after evening devotion, Rev. Walther conducted a meditation on the turn of the year. The hope that on the first day of the new year the eagerly desired coast of America would come into view gave new strength to the hearts of the emigrants. . . . On Wednesday, January 2, we were becalmed. On the 4th we caught a distant view of the island of Porto Rico, but could not as yet make out the contour. At midnight we had another violent thunder shower, accompanied by much wind. On Sunday, January 6, at two o'clock in the morning, the *Olbers* approached the coast of San Domingo. The storm still interfered with the conducting of religious services, and the ship sailed so close to the shore that the passengers could discern the various trees. Everybody reveled in the privilege, so long denied, of seeing land. Unfavorable winds caused the captain to tack [sail a zigzag course] for three days; but on the 10th, in the afternoon, a more favorable wind filled the sails of our schooner. San Domingo disappeared, and on the northern horizon the island of Cuba arose in majestic splendor. The *Olbers* sailed closer and closer, and soon the glorious landscape with its fertile plantations and romantic mountain ranges was revealed to the gaze of the astonished passengers.

## THE EMIGRANT

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"On the 20th day of January, 1839, a marvelously sun-bright day, we sailed up along the shores of the Mississippi, here beautifully adorned with plantations of sugar-cane, cotton, and tobacco, the sight of which filled the minds of the passengers with the highest expectations concerning America. Thus we entered the great commercial port of New Orleans and dropped anchor among a forest of more than a thousand great seagoing vessels and river steamers lying at anchor here."

The various ships, in turn, arrived safely at New Orleans, except the *Amalia*, which was lost at sea with 58 or 59 passengers on board. Walther's brother, Otto Hermann, during the days of anxious waiting, composed a poem dedicated to the ill-fated *Amalia*, of which we give two stanzas from the translation of W. M. Czamanske. The alternate stanzas in this poem represent the Lord's reply to the prayer of the immigrants, who were hoping against hope that the ship would appear and restore their loved ones to them.

Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus, the ship has not come,  
The ship named *Amalia* is missing!  
When wilt Thou, O Pilot, convey her back home  
From the storms that are howling and hissing?  
Have we, Lord, been favored Thy mercies to share?  
Was their ship too small for Thy kindness and care?  
Lord Jesus, come, still all our yearning  
And hasten *Amalia's* returning!

I granted her prayer  
For kindness and care.  
She was not too small  
For tempest and squall.  
My love went with her a-sailing,  
My power and presence prevailing.  
My sheep, neither hopeless nor craven,  
Were led to a beautiful haven.

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So He laid our gold in the burning fire,  
Though we fain would have said Him nay,  
And He watched the dross that we had not seen  
As it melted and passed away.  
And the gold grew brighter and yet more bright;  
But our eyes were so dim with tears  
We saw but the fire, not the Master's hand,  
And questioned with anxious fears.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

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## DAYS OF TRIAL

*It is good for me that I have been afflicted that I might learn Thy statutes.*  
Psalm 119:71.

SAD at heart because of the loss of their friends on the *Amalia*, the company of Saxon immigrants, about 650 in all, left New Orleans on four river steamers, bound for St. Louis. When they landed at their destination, their coming caused quite a stir in that bustling frontier city of nearly 20,000 inhabitants, a goodly number of them Germans, which boasted a German newspaper, the *Anzeiger des Westens*. A large house on Broadway, between St. Louis and the village of Bremen, was rented for the leader of the immigrants. The rest were cared for in the boardinghouses and private homes of the community.

## DAYS OF TRIAL

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For the majority the stay in St. Louis was to be only temporary. Within a short time their leader had purchased a tract of 4,472.6 acres, located in Perry County, Missouri, about a hundred miles south of St. Louis. During the spring of that year the immigrants moved to their colony site, the



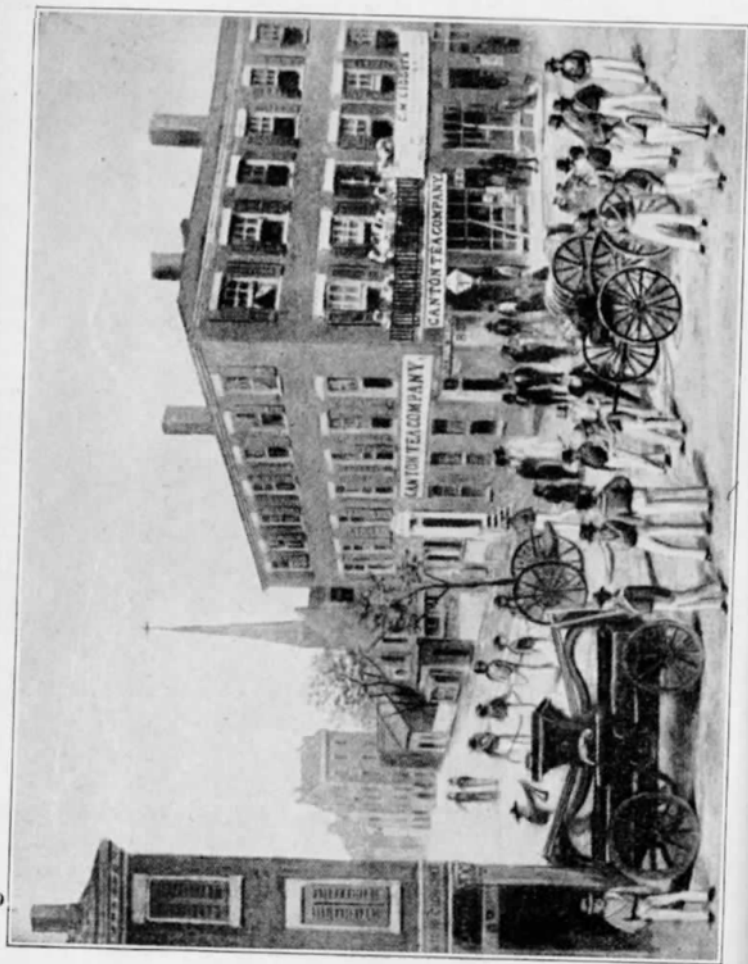
*G. H. Loeber*



*Theo. Brohm*

last group, under the Rev. G. H. Loeber, leaving St. Louis on May 29.

However, a number of professional men, artisans, merchants, and laborers, about 120 in all, remained in St. Louis and chose Otto Hermann Walther as their pastor. This group organized a congregation, later called Trinity Church, the mother church of our Synod in St. Louis. Christ Episcopal Church allowed this congregation to use its edifice for church services until a building of its own could be erected.



*Old St. Louis, Corner Fourth and Olive*

The immigrants who went to Perry County were not spared the experiences of such new settlements: malaria, poverty, and hard pioneer labor. All this, amid unusual surroundings in a strange land, filled their hearts with treasured memories of the fatherland, and the names of the village sites which they founded are evidences of the fondness with which they thought of the homeland: Wittenberg, Altenburg, Frohna, Dresden, Seelitz, Johannesburg, and Paitzdorf. They organized the following parishes: *Wittenberg and Frohna*, served by the Rev. E. G. W. Keyl; *Altenburg*, served by the Rev. G. H. Loeber; *Seelitz*, served by the Rev. E. M. Buerger; *Paitzdorf*, served by the Rev. C. F. Gruber; and *Dresden and Johannesburg* were placed in charge of the Rev. C. F. W. Walther, who had come to the colony in May.

The Rev. G. H. Loeber, in a letter to Saxony, dated September 10, 1839, describes the conditions in the colony thus: "The younger Walther [C. F. W. Walther was affectionately called "the little Walther" by the people to distinguish him from his elder brother] labors in the congregation at Dresden. . . . In the territory of Dresden are several shacks, which were built in the beginning of our settlement here. In one of these the three married ministers with their families are living in close quarters, but without being in each other's way. Walther, together with Candidate O. Fuerbringer, lives with those from Berlin. Opposite our house many families live together in a much larger shack of flimsy build, called 'camp.' In this camp we also have our common services and give the most necessary schooling until our almost completed college . . . and the church and school of each congregation will be ready. . . .



"Do not worry on our account because of Indians, wild beasts, and Mexican soldiers; so far all these things have not come near us."

The immigrants had started out from Saxony with a well-filled community fund of about 124,000 thaler (about \$88,000). 60,000 thaler had been paid out for ocean transportation and freight and \$10,000 for the land in Perry County. Other expenses were heavy, so that now the common fund was running low and poverty stared the settlers in the face.



E. G. W. Keyl

In the midst of these conditions the colonists suddenly found, to their extreme consternation, that they could no longer follow the man who had led them thus far. In their opinion he had proved himself to be unworthy of their trust. Because they had previously placed such implicit confidence in him, the result was

pitiable bewilderment, misery, and spiritual confusion. The Rev. J. F. Koesterling, in his *Story of the Saxon Emigration*, describes the conditions as follows:

"All was confusion. Even shelter was lacking for so many people; there were only a few large barns, called 'camps,' in which the families dwelt together as well as circumstances permitted, even during the following winter. Land had been purchased, but no one held title to any part of the

tract, so that no one could call the land he was living on his own. Even those who had possessed some wealth were exposed to the sorrows of poverty. Climatic fevers, the unaccustomed hard work, the lack of proper shelter, the want of common comforts and necessities, and the hot climate brought intense suffering. Death claimed a heavy toll among the strongest and ablest of the little host; others lay without proper care in the delirium of fever, since those who would gladly have nursed them were themselves prostrate with disease. I well remember the days when in a frame structure on the banks of the Mississippi not only the lower floor but also the hot attic was filled with fever patients. I remember that in the season of autumn there was not one of the log houses, hurriedly constructed, which did not contain one or more colonists down with the dreadful fever. The settlement was one large hospital, and even the most necessary care for the patients was wanting."



*Ottomar Fuerbringer*

A St. Louis paper, on June 15, 1839, contained the following report:

"News of a deplorable character is reaching us from the 'Old-Lutheran' settlement in Perry County. The greater part of the immigrants is still without shelter; 150 people are huddled together in a shed which is no protection

against storm or rain. Their property is soaked through with moisture, and they themselves frequently have no change of dry clothes for days in succession. Diseases are making their appearance, and some of the patients are believed to be past recovery. Withal, there is no leadership and no means to keep this crowd of people wholesomely employed. They tried to put up log houses, but they lacked draught animals to haul the logs. They tried to pull the logs by manpower, but gave up the attempt without building a single house. Then, at this season of the year, they tried to clear the forest. On account of the heat and humidity those who made the attempt were prostrated. Only eighty acres of land are under cultivation. Money is becoming scarce; how shall these unfortunate ones be fed? There is much despondency on every hand."

On June 29 the same paper reported:

"Of the 500 persons some are dwelling in farmhouses, by far the greater number in tents or in open sheds or under shelters made of branches and foliage. The families live on rations mostly limited to rice and bacon. Such of the men as are able to work try to clear the ground and build fences, but succeed rather poorly because there is no experienced direction and they lack draught animals. There is general dejection, and many are prostrated by the combined influence of the unaccustomed labor, the strange climate, the scantiness of food, poor shelter, humid weather, noisome insects, and foot rash."

Their spiritual troubles were even harder to bear than their poverty and physical distress. Pastors and people were filled with doubts and uncertainties. They asked

themselves: "Can the blessing of God rest upon our undertaking? Have we not called down God's displeasure by putting too much trust in man? Have we the Church in our midst? Have our ministers the right to dispense the Sacraments to us? Did we not sin by leaving the State Church of the Fatherland?" Many withdrew from divine services. Some packed up their goods and returned to Germany. One pastor, the Rev. E. M. Buenger, resigned his office. It was a serious situation. They were at their wit's end; and as the inspired Psalmist said: "They cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses." They experienced what Antoinette Wilson wrote in her beautiful poem:

Are you standing at "Wit's End Corner"?  
 Then you're just in the very spot  
 To learn the wondrous resources  
 Of Him who faileth not;  
 No doubt to a brighter pathway  
 Your footsteps will soon be moved.  
 But only at "Wit's End Corner"  
 Is the "God who is able" proved.

And the Lord, who had led them thus far, showed that He had not forsaken them. He also showed that there was a divine purpose behind the circumstance that young Walther had been saved from dying of tuberculosis in his student days and had in the intervening years also passed through the fiery trial of affliction to the strengthening of his faith, for he now emerged as the leader of the colonists. With God's Word as his only guide, he was able to quiet their fears, dispel their doubts, and instill new courage to face the tasks and problems of the future unafraid.

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AFTER the darkness and the storm  
Cometh a radiant light;  
After the winds and the rain  
Cometh the sunshine bright;  
After the gloaming and night  
Cometh the glorious dawn;  
After the toiling and cares  
Cometh the victor's song.

After the turmoil and strife  
Cometh a wondrous peace;  
After the doubts and the fears  
Cometh a sure release;  
After the sorrow and tears  
Cometh a heavenly strain;  
After the prayer and praise  
Cometh His blessing again.

CAROLINE GRAYSON

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## THE DAWN OF A NEW DAY

*If ye continue in My Word, then are ye  
My disciples indeed; and ye shall know  
the truth, and the truth shall make you  
free.*

John 8:31-32

IN the late summer of 1839 the German newspaper in St. Louis, the *Anzeiger des Westens*, carried the following notice:

### AN INSTITUTION OF INSTRUCTION AND EDUCATION

We, the undersigned intend to establish an institution of instruction and education, which distinguishes itself from ordinary elementary schools especially by this, that it

comprises, besides the ordinary branches, all *Gymnasium* branches (*Gymnasialwissenschaften*) necessary to a true Christian and scientific education, as: Religion, the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, German, French, and English languages, History, Geography, Mathematics, Physics, Natural History, Elementary Philosophy, Music, Drawing. The pupils in our institution are to be so far advanced in the above-named studies that after absolving a complete course of study, they shall be qualified for university studies. The esteemed parents who may desire to place their children with our institution are requested to make inquiries regarding its plan and arrangement of Pastor O. H. Walther in St. Louis, Poplar Street, No. 14, between First and Second streets. Instructions are to begin, God willing, on the 1st of October of this year.

The settlement of the German Lutherans in Perry County, near the Obrazo, August 13, 1839.

C. FERDINAND WALTHERR

OTTOMAR FUERBRINGER

TH. JUL. BROHM

JOH. FR. BUENGER

The citizens of St. Louis must have rubbed their eyes in astonishment when they read this notice. Only a few months previously they had read accounts of the miserable destitution of the Saxon Lutherans in Perry County, and now these same bewildered, poverty-stricken folk were advertising the opening of an institution for higher learning with a very extensive curriculum. The day of miracles apparently was not past. How had all this come about?

C. F. W. Walther himself gives us the best account of the birth of this institution in his *Life of J. F. Buenger*. It took place in the first months of colonization, when the trials and sufferings of the immigrants were at their height. Walther opens to our eyes a grand vision of the future which animated the hearts of the men whom we today gratefully remember as the "founders" of our Concordias.

**Unterrichts- und Erziehungs-Anstalt.**

**W**ir, die Unterzeichneten, beabsichtigen, eine Unterrichts- und Erziehungs-Anstalt zu errichten, die sich von den gewöhnlichen Elementarschulen besonders dadurch unterscheidet, daß sie außer den allgemeinen Elementarkenntnissen sämtliche Gymnasialwissenschaften umfaßt, die zu einer wahrhaften christlichen und wissenschaftlichen Ausbildung erforderlich sind, als: Religion, lateinische, griechische und hebraische, deutsche, französische und englische Sprache, Geschichte, Geographie, Mathematik, Physik, Naturgeschichte, Anfangsgründe der Philosophie, Musik, Zeichnen.

In genannten Disciplinen sollen die Zöglinge unserer Anstalt so weit gefördert werden, daß sie nach Abschluß eines vollständigen Lehrcursums zu den Universitätsstudien tüchtig sind.

Die verehrlichen Eltern, welche ihre Kinder unserer Anstalt übergeben wollen, werden ersucht, von Plan und Einrichtung derselben bei Pastor O. H. Walther in St. Louis, Verlatzer, No. 14, zwischen der 1sten und 2ten, nähere Kenntniß zu nehmen. — Der Unterricht soll, geliebt's Gott, den 1. October d. J. seinen Anfang nehmen.

Am Aufstellungstage der deutschen Insulaner in Perry County, Mo., umweit d. 8 Straße, den 13. August 1839.

C. F. W. Walther, Th. Jul. Brohm,  
Ottoemar Fierbringer, Joh. Fr. Dinger.

43-44

*Advertisement in the St. Louis "Anzeiger des Westens" for the Opening of the Log-Cabin College in Perry County*

He writes: "Although at that time the large number of immigrant pastors and theological candidates . . . assured the immigrant congregations of a sufficient supply of pastors for a long period of years, nevertheless the three candidates at that time still resident in Perry County, Th. Brohm, O. Fierbringer, and J. F. Buenger, considered it their duty

not to leave the founding of institutions for the training and education of faithful teachers and ministers slothfully and carelessly to the future. Had not the solicitude for the future of the children with regard to church and school been the strongest motive for their immigration to America? Though the greatest efforts were required from day to day to supply the daily bread for the poor body, yet the question of how to supply bread for the soul remained the chief concern and the most important task, as they firmly clung to the word of the Lord "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Where-withal shall we be clothed?" "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Joyfully the pastors then living in Perry County, G. H. Loeber, E. G. W. Keyl, and the younger Walther, entered upon the plan to start the founding of a so-called college, promising their active support."

The three theological candidates, with the help of several members of the congregations, now set to work to build a college in the forest primeval. Naturally it had to be a log cabin. They set to work clearing the ground, felling trees, dragging them to the clearing, dressing them to the required size, and erecting the building. Walther says: "There it was our Buenger who outdid all the others. . . . Buenger dug the still existing [at the time of writing, 1882] college well with his own hands all alone. When the little log cabin at last stood completed and was dedicated, there was a joy the depth of which only he could fully realize who had once shared it." For the dedication and opening of the institution, December 9, 1839, Otto



Hermann Walther sent an original poem, which also expressed the heartfelt hopes and prayers which the immigrants cherished regarding the purpose and the future of their humble college. Ferdinand Walther and the three candidates, as we see from the notice in the *Anzeiger des Westens*, constituted the first faculty of the school.

The erection and opening of this college was one very



*The Log-Cabin College and Seminary*  
From a drawing by Teacher J. F. Winter

tangible indication that the Lord was leading His sorely tried children out of the darkness of confusion and bewilderment into the dawn of a new day. The other sign was the outcome of a public debate, held at Altenburg within the rude walls of this log-cabin college in April of the year 1841.

This debate, or disputation, was arranged by Ferdinand Walther and the other pastors, Keyl and Loeber, in order to quiet the minds of the people on the question: "Are we a Church of God or only a rabble?" The leader on the

opposing side was Dr. Adolph Marbach, a learned lawyer, who took the position that the colony, by separating itself from the Saxon state church, had ceased to be a truly Christian Church, being simply a sect, without the power of the Office of the Keys, and ought to return to the fatherland in order to undo the wrong committed by their emigration.

It was the younger Walther who proved to be the real leader of the colony in this debate. He based his arguments on the Scriptures and so thoroughly convinced all those present that even the opponents confessed themselves vanquished and admitted that the Church was among them, that their pastors were rightly called, and that their official acts were valid.

As the theses which Walther had carefully prepared for this debate are the foundation not only of all his later writings on the subject of church organization, but also of the organization of the Missouri Synod, they are quoted in full:

### I

The true Church, in the most real and most perfect sense, is the totality (*Gesamtheit*) of all true believers, who from the beginning to the end of the world from among all peoples and tongues have been called and sanctified by the Holy Spirit through the Word. And since God alone knows these true believers (2 Tim. 2:19), the Church is also called invisible. No one belongs to this true Church who is not spiritually united with Christ, for it is the spiritual body of Jesus Christ.

### II

The name of the true Church belongs also to all those visible groups of men among whom God's Word is purely taught and the holy Sacraments are administered according to the institution of Christ. True, in this Church there are godless men, hypocrites and heretics, but they are not true members of it, nor do they constitute the Church.

## THE STORY OF C. F. W. WALTHER

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### III

The name Church, and, in a certain sense, the name true Church, belongs also to those visible groups of men who have united under the confession of a falsified faith and therefore have incurred the guilt of a partial departure from the truth; provided that they possess so much of God's Word and the holy Sacraments in purity that children of God may thereby be born. When such groups are called true churches, it is not the intention to state that they are faithful, but only that they are real churches as opposed to all worldly organizations (*Gemeinschaften*).

### IV

The name Church is not improperly applied to heterodox groups, but according to the manner of speech of the Word of God itself. It is also not immaterial that this high name is allowed to such communions, for out of this follows

1. That members also of such groups may be saved; for without the Church there is no salvation.

### V

2. The outward separation of a heterodox group from an orthodox Church is not necessarily a separation from the universal Christian Church nor a relapse into heathenism and does not yet deprive that company of the name Church.

### VI

3. Even heterodox companies have Church power; even among them the goods of the Church may be validly administered, the ministry established, the Sacraments validly administered, and the keys of the kingdom of heaven exercised.

### VII

4. Even heterodox groups are not to be dissolved, but reformed.

### VIII

The orthodox Church is chiefly to be judged by the common, orthodox, public confession to which its members acknowledge and confess themselves to be pledged.

THE DAWN OF A NEW DAY

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The far-reaching importance of this debate and its successful outcome is indicated by the judgment which one of the pastors present, the Rev. G. A. Schieferdecker, passed on it some years later:

"It was shown [by Walther] with convincing clarity that in spite of our mistakes we still had the Lord Jesus, His Word, His true Sacrament, and the Office of the Keys in our midst; that the Lord had also here His people, His Church. More was hardly needed to take the pressure off our conscience and to revive faith in the hearts of those who had all but despaired. It was the Easter morn of a severely tried congregation, on which they, as once the disciples, saw the Savior again, whom they believed dead, and in the light of His grace and in the power of His resurrection were filled with joy and hope."

There is no doubt that Walther at this time learned to understand clearly, on the basis of God's Word, the principles regarding the doctrine of the church and the ministry, which were so important afterwards in laying the foundation for our synodical organization.

GIVE me the man whose graces shall possess  
Of an ambassador the just address:  
A father's tenderness; a shepherd's care;  
A leader's courage, which the cross can bear;  
A ruler's awe; a watchman's wakeful eyes;  
A good physician's quiet way and wise;  
A fisher's patience and a laborer's toil;  
A guide's dexterity to disembroil;  
A prophet's inspiration from above;  
A teacher's knowledge; and a Savior's love.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

9

PASTOR IN ST. LOUIS

*I will bless thee and make thy name  
great; and thou shalt be a blessing.*  
Gen. 12:2.

DURING the anxious months prior to the Altenburg Debate, Walther had been seriously ill. No doubt this sickness was partly a result of his mental state at the time; but as his study of the Scriptures gradually cleared up his own doubts as to the rightfulness of their emigration and their true status as a Christian Church, his physical condition also improved. Then came the sad news from St. Louis that his elder brother, the gifted Otto Hermann Walther, had passed away after a short illness on January 21, 1841, leaving his wife, Agnes, nee Buenger, and a baby son of three months.

When the St. Louis congregation, after the burial of their beloved minister, took up the task of calling a new pastor on February 8, their choice was Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther. The formal call having been drawn up, the congregation delegated one of its members, Mr. M. Quast, to travel to Perry County and to place it into the hands of the pastor-elect, urging him to accept and to come to St. Louis as soon as possible.

Walther could not well give an immediate answer as to what his decision would be. He was in the midst of his preparations for the Altenburg Debate. His health had not been fully restored. He had to have time to weigh the matter carefully. Therefore in a lengthy letter, in which he frankly stated these things, he promised to leave nothing undone to attain a clear knowledge of the will of God as quickly as possible.

More than two months elapsed before he reached his decision to accept the call, and then he appeared before the congregation in person to inform them to that effect. It was



*C. F. W. Walther as He Looked  
at the Time of His Early Ministry  
in St. Louis*

From a daguerreotype in the museum  
of Concordia Historical Institute

in a meeting of the congregation on April 26, 1841. Before the assembled members Walther gave the following reasons for his acceptance: "First, his health had been restored; secondly, through a diligent study of ancient teachers of the Church he had come to the conviction that when, on the part of a calling congregation, everything had been done according to the divine order, the person called ought by



*St. Louis River Front in 1840*

no means to decline the call; thirdly, any mistakes which he might have made in connection with the emigration were no such sins as would render him unworthy of the office (1 Tim. 3:7; Titus 1:7); fourthly, he now was fully convinced that the congregation could not be deprived of the honor of being a Christian congregation and therefore could not be denied the rights of the same." On Jubilate Sunday he preached his initial sermon and began his services in the church with which he was to be connected for forty-six years, until his death in 1887.

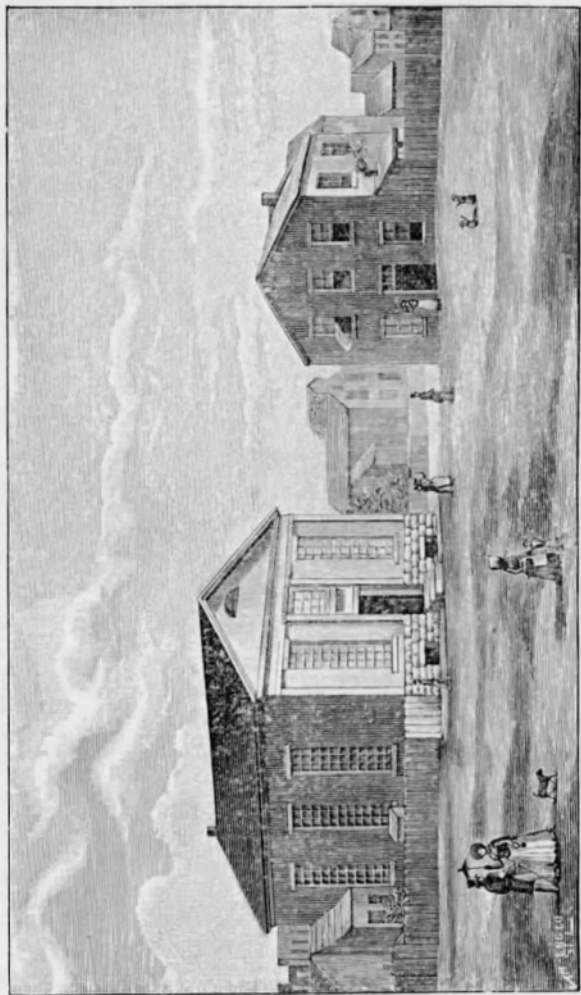
## PASTOR IN ST. LOUIS

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Walther thus came out of the backwoods of Missouri into the thriving Midwestern metropolis, St. Louis. But the conditions were extremely primitive. We do not know what his salary was, but very likely it was the same as his brother had received, \$15 a month and free rooms on the second floor of a building on Poplar Street, which the congregation rented for its parochial school. The congregation had no place of worship of its own. No formal constitution had as yet been adopted. There were disturbing spirits within the congregation, and there were enemies without who slandered it. The outlook for the future was not very promising. In short, the young pastor, a little more than twenty-nine years old, had a real task on his hands. A few years later, when Ferdinand Walther made the acquaintance of Dr. W. Sihler, one of the great men who were to be his able adjutants in building the Missouri Synod, the latter noticed that, though Walther was only thirty-five, his face was strangely aged. No doubt this appearance was due to the multiplicity of his trials and labors. All that he had endured prior to his pastorate in St. Louis and the severe struggles of those first years at Trinity Church could not but leave their imprint upon his countenance.

During the first two years of his ministry in St. Louis his work was embittered by an opposition group in the congregation, headed by a certain Sproede, who had followed him to St. Louis after having caused him much heartache in Perry County. These agitators accused Walther of insincerity and hierarchical aims, called him pietist and hypocrite, pleaded with the congregation to depose him, questioned the right of the congregation to exist, demanded that





*Trinity Lutheran Church and Parsonage, St. Louis, in 1842*

From a drawing by Fr. Lochner

it be dissolved, and the like. The leader even went so far as to attack the congregation in the public press.

Though the agitation did not cease until Sproede's death, in 1843, the congregation did not permit itself to be disrupted thereby; instead, it came forth out of this time of trial greatly strengthened spiritually. Walther, as a true pastor and shepherd of souls, knew that the Word of God was the only means that could help him and his people to stand up under these malicious attacks. In the congregational meetings that were held he elaborated the truths and principles laid down in the Altenburg Debate, and as the Christian knowledge of his people increased, the firm desire to organize properly and to build for the future became very evident.

Up to the autumn of 1842 the congregation continued to use either the church proper or the basement of Christ Episcopal Church for its services. The generous hospitality of this church, which extended over a period of three years, was never forgotten. But this arrangement could not go on indefinitely, and the year 1842 finds the Saxons taking the necessary steps to obtain a church of their own. A suitable lot was purchased on Lombard Street, between Third and Fourth streets, and soon the construction of the building was under way. While the plans were being discussed, the question was raised regarding a name. The pastor suggested no special name himself, but he did lay down certain principles for the consideration of his members in choosing a name. They were these: First, the name of the church ought not to be the name of a man; secondly, it ought to contain a confession; thirdly, it ought not to invite the mockery of the world.

The name selected by his flock was Trinity, and the same principles evidently actuated the congregation in naming the subsequent churches erected by it, for the names given them were Immanuel, Holy Cross, and Zion.

When the cornerstone of Trinity Church was laid, June 22, 1842, Walther placed into it a document containing the history of the congregation, the number of members, the reasons for the name it had chosen, and the purpose of the edifice:

"Know, O reader, whoever thou mayest be, for this reason have we given our church the high and holy name of Trinity Church, because we acknowledge no other God to be the true God save the Triune, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, even as He has revealed Himself to us in His Word. Know, O reader, for this purpose only have we laid the foundation of this our church, that therein the pure Word of God, according to the interpretation of the Apostolic and, after it, of the Evangelical Lutheran Church may be preached to us and our descendants and the holy Sacraments — Holy Baptism and Holy Communion — may be administered, according to the institution of Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, by the called ministers of the church." The congregation at the time had a membership of 325 souls.

On the Second-Sunday in Advent, December 4, 1842, the church building was formally dedicated to God with appropriate services and the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Walther's dedicatory sermon, preached in the morning of that memorable day, has not been preserved, but we no

doubt find an echo of it in his sermon delivered on the following Sunday, which begins as follows:

"And so it is really true, God has actually permitted us to perform what we hardly dared hope a few years ago, yea, hardly dared wish for. God has actually given us a place in our new fatherland where He will record His name for us and for our children, will come to us, and will bless us. Oh, the exceedingly good God!"

No wonder that the zealous young pastor, out of the overflowing joy of his heart, added: "Many new and high hopes are awakened in my soul." Without a doubt his heart was filled with gratitude to God for making use of him as an instrument for the building of His kingdom, as expressed by the poet in these words:

I thank Thee, Lord, for using me for Thee to work and speak;  
However trembling is the hand, the voice however weak;  
For those to whom through me Thou hast some heavenly guidance  
given;  
For some, it may be, saved from death and some brought  
nearer heaven.  
O honor higher, truer, far than earthly fame could bring  
Thus to be used, in work like this, so long, by such a King!

In the meantime preparations were being made for the adoption of a proper congregational constitution. Walther as a matter of course took the initiative in drawing up this necessary document on the basis of the Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, and the works of orthodox Lutheran teachers. The various paragraphs of the proposed constitution were thoroughly discussed in the congregational meetings. When the constitution was finally ready for the subscriptions of the members, in the spring of 1843, Walther emphasized the following four points: "First, that it is

the will of God that every congregation have its constitution; secondly, that God has given His children liberty to arrange all things according to their needs; thirdly, that in this we always have the Church as example; and fourthly, that a constitution is particularly necessary in this country, where the government does not concern itself with the affairs of the Church."

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SAVIOUR, who Thy flock art feeding  
With the Shepherd's kindest care,  
All the feeble gently leading  
While the lambs Thy bosom share —

Never, from Thy pasture roving,  
Let them wander far away;  
Let Thy tenderness, so loving,  
Keep them through life's dangerous way.

WILLIAM AUGUSTUS MUHLENBERG

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## 10

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### "FEED MY LAMBS—FEED MY SHEEP"

*And he lifted up his eyes . . . and said,  
Who are those with thee? And he said,  
The children which God hath graciously  
given thy servant.  
Gen. 33:5.*

THERE are two features in the early work of Walther and his congregation that show how thoroughly he realized his duty toward his Savior and His Church. One of these was the diligent care exercised in meeting the religious needs of the children of his congregation, and the other was his active interest in the little log-cabin college and seminary which he had helped to establish in 1839.

Walther himself did not found the parochial school in his congregation. It had been organized during the short pastorate of his brother, and Candidate Geyer had served

as teacher. The school was housed in a rented building on Poplar Street, the second floor of which became Walther's parsonage. Here he lived until he and his family moved into the parsonage opposite Trinity Church on Lombard Street. This home was rented from his mother-in-law, Mrs. Christiane Buenger, who occupied the upper floor with her daughters, Liddy, later Mrs. F. Lochner, and Mrs. Neu-mueller. When Candidate Geyer accepted another call, the



*J. F. Buenger*

congregation elected Walther's brother-in-law, Candidate J. F. Buenger, as his successor. These two men, friends since their university days at Leipzig, thus were brought together once more, this time to serve the same congregation, and henceforth they were to stand shoulder to shoulder in the work of building the Kingdom until death parted them. Both were wholeheartedly in favor of a thorough religious training of the young. In fact, this was the consensus of opinion among the Sax-

on immigrants. Walther writes: "In the Saxon Lutheran congregations it was the standing rule to establish together with the ministerial office also the office of teaching. Only a few days after the arrival of the first company of immigrants here in St. Louis a school was opened. The same thing was done in all the other congregations in Perry County. If it was not possible to appoint a teacher, it was

a matter of course that the pastor should serve also as schoolmaster to the best of his ability."

As to the school in his own parish, of which he was superintendent by virtue of his pastoral office, Walther, in his *Life of Buenger*, graphically describes the conditions and difficulties of these early years. The schoolroom on Poplar Street was large enough for about fifty pupils; but often the enrollment reached eighty. Then some of the children had to use the veranda and the stairs leading to the pastor's room above. The schoolroom had to serve also as a dwelling for the teacher; but his bed and his household goods took up only a minimum of space.

Under Buenger's leadership the school had a good reputation, as he worked hard to teach the children, devoting himself especially to the beginners in order that they might as quickly as possible follow the instructions with profit. Many parents not members of the church sent their children because they realized that they would be well instructed and also well trained. Even the Evangelical pastor, the Rev. Mr. Wall, enrolled his adopted child.

The teacher's salary was \$15 a month, raised partly by the tuition (five cents a week for each child), partly by the collections taken at the church door on Sundays. On the free Wednesday afternoons, customary at that time, Buenger visited the public schools in St. Louis and received many useful hints on discipline, so difficult and yet so essential a matter in a one-room school.

The courses given in the school and the books used are described by Walther in detail:



"The subjects of instruction in this school were: Bible History, the Catechism, Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, and some English.

"The almost complete lack of suitable schoolbooks at that time caused great embarrassment. The A-B-C book used by Buenger was printed in St. Louis (in the office of the *Anzeiger des Westens*) and consisted at the most of twelve leaves, upon which 'Brief German Language Lessons' were to be found as an appendix. It is self-evident that the religious instruction was given according to Luther's Small Catechism, which in most cases also those parents purchased who did not belong to the 'Saxon congregation,' as it was even at that time generally called; for although these did not send their children to school for the sake of the religious instructions, they were nevertheless expected to conform to the rule, according to which no one was excused from them. The songs which were to be practiced and learned for the most part had to be copied, as there were no songbooks. Somewhat later a friend in Germany sent a chest filled with songbooks, which were now introduced. They were printed in Frankfort on the Main and bore the title *Kern geistlicher Lieder*. The New Testament at first served as a reader. Afterwards Buenger, in his need, procured a selection of the best tracts for the purpose, which, being published by the American Tract Society, were to be had for a small price."

After the congregation had erected its own church building, the roomy basement of the church was used for school purposes. Soon the number of children enrolled passed the 150 mark. "With great joy and manifest success Buenger labored among this respectable flock of Christ's lambs."

As the congregation grew and spread over the entire city, active mission work was naturally undertaken. In order to do this adequately, especially among the children, it was soon necessary to erect a branch school. In December, 1844, this second school was opened in the so-called St. Louis Gardens, corner Wash and Eighth streets, and a younger brother of J. F. Buenger was called to teach there. This was Theodore E. Buenger, generally called *Cantor* Buenger by the fathers because of his musical ability.

The details described in the preceding paragraphs are sufficient to show how important a matter the Christian education and training of the children was to Walther and his people. It is this spirit that underlies the entire parochial school system established and fostered with such manifest blessings by the Missouri Synod since its beginning and is something that ought not to be forgotten by our own generation and those that are to come. For this reason we cannot refrain from quoting several significant statements from D. H. Steffens's interesting biography of Walther:

"Certain things stand out in this account of the founding of Walther's parish school. First, the relative importance in the minds of these people of the 'three R's,' as compared with Bible History and the Catechism. In enumerating the several branches taught in the school, Bible History and the Catechism come first; reading, writing and arithmetic come second. In all of these parish schools the first hour of the day is invariably devoted to the teaching of religion. It could not well be otherwise; for in the minds of these people the attending children were not pupils merely, but

'lambs of Christ,' who gave command to His undershepherds: 'Feed My sheep,' 'Feed My lambs.' That Christian Lutheran parents could be content to send their children to a school where, in the very nature of things, the teaching of religion was impossible was simply inconceivable.

"Again there is the relation of the pastor to the school. If the attendant children are 'lambs of Christ,' by Holy Baptism members of His flock, then Christ's undershepherd has the selfsame duty toward them that he has toward every other member of the congregation committed to his charge. As he values his soul's salvation, he dare not neglect his school.

"On the other hand, there was no underestimation of purely secular learning. They talk like this: 'Surely God has intended our children in this country for something else than merely to become bearers of wood and drawers of water for the spirit of speculation. If we consider in what deplorable state civil affairs here find themselves, whereas God would certainly also have His secular government (*Weltregiment*) decently appointed and managed and would punish the contrary with heavy judgment; and since it must surely be assumed that such people as have from their youth been instructed in God's Word and trained in the fear of God, also in civil government, will more conscientiously fill any position they may happen to occupy, we ought even for this reason to prepare our children unto God that He may also use them for this purpose."

However, Walther was not only concerned about the "feeding of the lambs." He also took great pains to "feed the sheep." We shall later describe his pastoral work and

his preaching. At this place it is of interest to show by another activity that he did not forget the future amid the many tasks and duties of the present.

Four years had passed since the building of the first little one-room log-cabin college and seminary in Perry County. In the meantime O. Fuerbringer had accepted a call to Illinois, J. F. Buenger and Walther had come to St. Louis, and now, in 1843, Theo. Brohm accepted a call to New York City. Thus the original faculty of the school had departed. G. H. Loeber and E. G. W. Keyl were trying to keep the institution alive; but Loeber's health was failing, so that he could not be expected any longer to carry the teaching burden in addition to the pastoral work in his own congregation. Something had to be done to save the college. Therefore Walther and his congregation, in the summer of 1843, began to give this institution serious consideration, not of course without consulting the other interested pastors. Jointly with the Perry County churches Walther's congregation now called Candidate J. J. Goenner as teacher and rector of the log-cabin school. A College Society was organized to give it financial support and to keep the interest in it alive. Many were of the opinion that the college should be transplanted to St. Louis; but the time for its removal was not opportune. That step, however, followed six years later, as we shall see.

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LIFT up your eyes, ye Christians,  
And heed the Lord's command;  
Go, labor in His vineyard  
And lend a helping hand.  
Like sheep without a shepherd  
So many go astray;  
Neglected, they must perish.  
This is your harvest day.

C. K. SOLBERG

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## II

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### NEW HORIZONS

*And it shall come to pass afterward that  
I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh;  
and your sons and your daughters shall  
prophesy, your old men shall dream  
dreams, your young men shall see visions.  
Joel 2:28.*

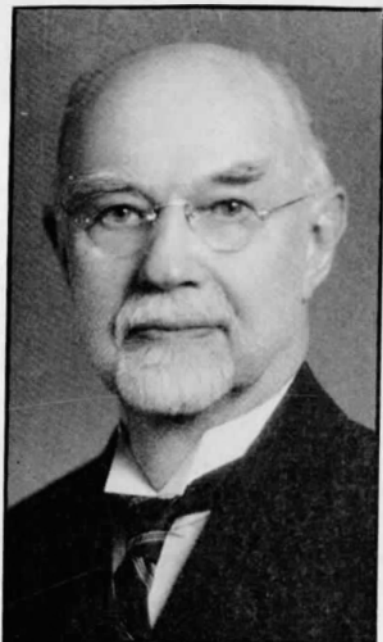
WHAT has been recorded in the foregoing chapter shows that the doubt and uncertainty which filled the hearts of the Saxons during the first years of their settlement in America were definitely things of the past. They had completely laid aside all thoughts of returning to the Fatherland. They were convinced that America was to be their field of labor in building the kingdom of Jesus Christ. In the work that was being done they showed that they were beginning to spread their roots deeply into the new soil.

Another task that C. F. W. Walther now undertook was to be far-reaching in its effect and outstanding in establishing sound confessional Lutheranism in America. This was the publication of a church paper for his congregation, to which he gave the appropriate and significant name *Der Lutheraner* (*The Lutheran*). This church paper was to play a leading part in extending the sphere of influence of this orthodox Lutheran group.

Walther, in a subsequent issue of his *Der Lutheraner*, tells us how he conceived the idea of such a publication:

"For a number of years we had quietly endeavored to ground ourselves more deeply in the accepted truth. This treasure and our Church, in which it had been found, became more and more dear to us. With deep sorrow we saw in the few papers published here, on the one hand, how falsely the doctrine of our Church was being represented by our enemies and, on the other hand, how bitterly this doctrine was being assailed. . . . These circumstances finally developed in us the resolve to publish a little paper, which under the open and honorable name *Der Lutheraner* should serve our beloved Church, according to its local needs, in the measure that God would thereto grant His grace. The prospects of calling such a paper into existence were extremely unfavorable. Our immigrant churches were still very poor and had to bring almost impossible sacrifices in order to enjoy the benefits of properly regulated and well-supplied Evangelical Lutheran congregations. It was hardly to be expected that they alone would be able to assure the life of the paper, and otherwise we had almost no acquaintance and connection with pastors and congregations. . . .

Our sole aim was, and all we hoped to be able to do was, to send into wider circles about as many papers as were necessary to bear unmistakable testimony as to what the Lutheran Church and its doctrine really are."



*Dr. L. Fuerbringer*

President emeritus of Concordia  
Seminary

Present Editor of "Der Lutheraner"

Walther laid his plan for a church paper before his congregation on June 3, 1844, with the request to grant him the required support for the undertaking. His people unanimously endorsed the project, and it is noteworthy that in a later meeting, on August 12, many members not only promised to subscribe for two copies each, but the congregation agreed to pay a balance of \$4.68, needed to defray the cost of the first issue, and to assume future deficits.

On September 7, 1844, the initial number of the *Lutheraner* appeared, with the appropriate motto, "God's Word and Luther's doctrine pure Shall now and evermore endure" and with the declared purpose of

# Der Lutheraner.

„Wer's Wort vom heiligen Geiste" versteht man sich auseinander."

Herausgegeben von G. F. W. Walther.

Tagr. 1.

St. Louis, Mo., den 7. September 1844.

No. 1.

Bezeichnungen: Der Lutheraner versteht die zwei Weisen, nämlich für den Christenstand von Jesus Christus und dem heiligen Geiste für die unendliche Macht Gottes, welche durch die Heile der Menschheit und das Vergehen zu retten haben. — In St. Louis wird jede einzelne Nummer für 4 Cents verkauft.

## Übermerkungen über Ursache, Zweck und Inhalt des Blattes.

Die deutsche Bevölkerung des Westens von Amerika wird schneller mit jedem Tage größer. Sie vermehren sich hier täglich die Anzahl derjenigen, welche sich zu dem Glauben bekennen, den einst Luther den Deutschen gelehrt hat. Es sehen jedoch hier die Lutheraner kaum andere lutherischen Gemeindefürsorge zu vermehren, als die der evangelisch-lutherischen. So viel über auch hier sein müssen, die sich nach Lutheraner nennen, so leben sie doch so gescheit und sind von allen Mitleiden noch so ganz entfernt, daß sie zu vielen Orten kaum im Glauben sind, in einen Gemeindefürsorge zu treten und einen Prediger ihrer Bekenntnis zu bestellen, der ihnen diene. Die deutschen Lutheraner sind daher hier in nicht geringer Verlegenheit, den Glauben ihrer Väter zu erhalten; zu weiter nach Kirche, Gottesdienst u. dgl. zu suchen zu fragen, aber in anderen hier bestehenden Gemeindefürsorge Verhinderung ihrer religiösen Bedürfnisse zu finden. Unsere theuren Gemeindefürsorge in dieser Weise unser neuen Gemeindefürsorge bedürfen darum allerdings der Erinnerung, ihrem Glauben treu zu bleiben; sie bedürfen der Ermahnung vor den Gefahren des Misses, wenn sie nicht ihnen hier drohen; sie bedürfen Muthes, sich gegen diejenigen zu verteidigen, die es ihnen erlauben machen, daß der Glaube der rechte ist, den sie von Jugend auf aus ihrem Gewissenstand gelernt haben; sie bedürfen den Trost, daß die Kirche, zu der sie sich bekennen, noch nicht verfallen ist, daß sie daher keineswegs Ursache haben, bei irgend einer anderen Gemeindefürsorge Zuflucht zu suchen.

Dieses genügt von vielen empfindenden Christen, die die Verlegenheit, daß es unser Mitleid ist, unsere höchsten Bedürfnisse darüber Mitleid selbst abzugeben, was in unsere Kirche gebracht und geleitet, und nach welchen Grundgesetzen leben und gehandelt werden: daß bei den Lutheranern keine Bewegung, in Verbindung mit mehreren (für unsern Zweck und Zweck) in Missouri und Illinois, ein Blatt unter eigenen Titel herauszugeben. Daß es sich nämlich dazu hinein: 1. mit der Kirche, den Schülern und der Gesellschaft der lutherischen Kirche bekannt zu machen; 2. den

Verstand dessen zu liefern, daß diese Kirche nicht in der Weise der christlichen Leben lebe, und nicht eine neue sondern die alte wahre Kirche Jesu Christi auf Erden sei, daß sie daher auch keinen Grund ausgeben ist, ja, nicht ausgeben könne, nach Christi Verheißung: „Nicht, ich bin bei euch alle Tage bis an der Welt Ende.“ Unser Blatt soll zuerst 3. dazu dienen, zu zeigen, wie ein Mensch als ein wahrer Lutheraner recht glauben, christlich leben, gehoblich leiden und sich freuen könne; und endlich 4. die im Schwange gebrachten Lehren, verführerischen Lehren zu entdecken, zu widerlegen und daher zu warnen, und insbesondere diejenigen zu entlarven, die sich fälschlich lutherisch nennen, unter diesem Namen Irgelehrten, Irgelehrten und Schwärmer verbreiten und daher die besten Beurtheiler gegen unser Kirche in den Lutheranern anderer Parteien erwecken.

Wahrscheinlich nicht wenige, wenn sie dieses lesen, werden und entweder die Fähigkeit abgeben, das Ziel, das wir uns selbst gesetzt haben, zu erreichen; oder sie werden fürchten, daß unser Blatt den Geist der Unbetheilbarkeit schmecken, und somit das Verstandesglaubens unterhalten und abnehmen werde. Was das erste Bedenken haben wir nur dieses zu antworten: Wir erkennen selbst gewiß lebendiger, als irgend jemand, wie viel und abgeht, den Beruf des Herausgebers eines christlichen Zeitungsblasses in seinem großen Vorhaben zu erfüllen; wir wissen aber, daß es in glänzenden Dingen nicht auf große Verstandesheit und Verstandesheit ankommt, sondern vielmehr möglich zu sein, sondern auf rechte lebendige Erkenntnis der ewig bleibenden Wahrheit und auf ein einfaches Zeugnis von derselben. Verzeihen haben wir die Mithie, in diesem Blatte die geistreichsten Lehren unserer Kirche, insbesondere Luthers, selbst reden zu lassen, und wir meinen, daß schon allein diese mit dem Blatte dargebotenen Gaben daselbst so gehoblich werden werden, daß sich der Leser das Langweilige nicht als eine geringe Ausgabe gefühlt lassen kann. Was das zweite Bedenken betrifft, so wird es gewiß bald gehoben werden, wenn die Leser nur einige Blätter mit Aufmerksamkeit und ohne Vorurtheil werden geprüft haben. Wir sind nicht eine genaue Zeit von manderlei Irrthümern gelangen gewesen, und Gott hat uns und Gehalt

gelehrt und uns mit großer Langmut auf den Weg der Wahrheit geleitet; dessen eingedenk werden daher auch wir gegen unsere irdischen Mithie Geduld betreiben und uns alles fälschlichen Mithie und Verstandes durch Gottes Gnade enthalten. Wir werden nicht sowohl die irdische Person, als vielmehr ihren Irthum angreifen. Wir werden uns auch nicht als solche erheben, die allein rein lutherisch sein und die Wahrheit allein besitzen wollen, sondern nur Zeugnis geben, daß Gott auch an uns Gutes gethan und zur lebendigen Erkenntnis der alleinigen Wahrheit gebracht hat.

St. Louis, Mo., im August 1844.

G. F. W. Walther,

Pastor der deutschen ev. luth. Gemeinde umgeben der Augustinischen Missionen hier.

## Zeugnisse Luthers:

Wahrscheinlich der Hauptartikel der christlichen Kirche ist.

In seiner herrlichen Auslegung des Briefes an die Galater schreibt derselbe: „In meinem Herzen lebe ich allein und soll auch derselbe diese einzige Heil, nämlich der Glaube an meinen lieben Herrn Christus, welcher aller meiner geistlichen und irdischen Bedenken, so ich immerzu Tag und Nacht haben mag, der einzige Befehl, Muth und Gabe ist. Und wieviel ich über viel Mithie davon gemacht, empfinde ich dennoch, gleichwohl, daß ich von der Fülle, Tiefe und Breite dieser unmöglichen, unbegreiflichen und unendlichen Weisheit kaum und gar sehrlich ein geringes, Mithie haben erreichen, und kaum einige kleine Schritte und Schritte aus der allerhöchsten Tiefe habe an das Licht bringen mögen.“ Dieser Artikel ist der einzige erste Teil und die einzige beständige Grundbedenken aller unserer Heile und Erlösung; nämlich, daß wir nicht durch und selbst, viel weniger durch unsere eigene Werke und Thun (welche freilich viel geringer und weniger sind, denn wir selbst) sondern daß wir durch fremde Heile, nämlich, daß wir durch den eingebornen Sohn Gottes, Jesus Christus, von Sünden, Tod und Hölle erlöst und zum ewigen Leben gelangen sind.“

Front Page of the First Issue of "Der Lutheraner"



"uniting the divided members of the Lutheran Church, to recall those who had fallen away, and to prove that our Church has not become extinct, aye, never can become extinct"; in short, "to prove that it is the true Church of Christ and not a sect." New horizons indeed!

This church paper, successfully launched, has been published regularly ever since, and today, over a hundred years

later, still enjoys a very wide circulation. It became the official organ of the Missouri Synod after its organization in 1847. The present editor, Dr. L. Fuerbringer, president emeritus of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, is the son of Rev. Ottomar Fuerbringer, Walther's friend and co-worker, who actively supported the paper from the beginning.

Dr. Wilhelm Sihler, then pastor at Pomeroy, Ohio, afterwards a staunch and able co-worker of Walther in the Missouri Synod, was one of



*Dr. Wm. Sihler  
in His Younger Years*

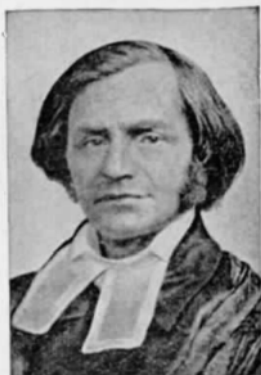
those outside the Saxon group who received the *Lutheraner*. In his autobiography, Sihler describes his reactions: "It was a great joy to receive the first number of the *Lutheraner*, and after I had read the following issues, I did not hesitate to recommend the paper to any congregation, as

the Lutherans in this country needed such a periodical; for many of them did not know what Lutheranism is and why they called themselves Lutheran Christians. Naturally I soon entered into extended correspondence with the editor."

Another Lutheran pastor in the Middle West, the Rev. Friedrich Wyneken, serving St. Paul's Church in Fort Wayne, Indiana, at the time, had in his rather far-flung field of work come into contact with a Lutheranism in the East that was not always truly confessional. When the first issue of the *Lutheraner* reached him, he read it with joy and appreciation. "Thank God," he exclaimed, "there are yet more Lutherans in America!"

A third pastor who received the *Lutheraner* and whose whole future work in the Kingdom was also affected thereby was the Rev. F. A. Craemer, then pastor of the church at Frankenmuth in the Saginaw Valley of Michigan and missionary to the Ojibway Indians in the vicinity. He also reacted favorably to its strict spirit of Lutheran orthodoxy.

Thus at the very outset Walther's far-seeing vision in the publication of his church paper bore rich fruitage, and soon a plan was conceived which, though it developed slowly, finally led to the organization of a truly Lutheran synod — the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States.



F. C. D. Wyneken  
in His Younger Years

However, before we take up the account of the founding of this historic organization, another activity of Walther's that was to be of great consequence should be mentioned, namely, the publication of a hymnbook.

Walther's congregation, like most other German congregations in those days, was made up of people who had come from different sections of the Fatherland and had of course brought with them their own particular hymnbooks. To arrange a service and to select hymns for it under those circumstances was difficult, since all the hymnbooks represented in the congregation had to be taken into account. As early as 1845 Walther therefore suggested to his congregation to consider the project of publishing its own hymnbook. His proposal met with a cordial response, and so he set himself the task of preparing one for publication, a task which was by no means simple. He invited and received the co-operation of his friends in the ministry in the choice of the hymns. What the principles were according to which they made their selection he tells us himself:

"In the selection of the adopted hymns the chief consideration was that they be pure in doctrine; that they had found almost general acceptance within the true German Lutheran Church and thereby had received the almost unanimous testimony that they had come forth out of the true spirit; that they express not so much the changing conditions of individual persons as rather the language of the whole Church, because the book was to be used primarily in public worship; and finally, that they, though bearing the imprint of Christian simplicity, be not merely rhymed prose, but the products of a truly Christian poesy. The editors

NEW HORIZONS

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have been fully conscious of the difficulty of their task; they have altogether despaired of their own wisdom and pleaded earnestly with God for the illumination and direction of His Holy Spirit and especially for the gift of trying and discerning the spirits."

Walther then concludes with the assurance that they had ultimately selected only those hymns out of the immense treasury of German hymnody which they considered especially worthy of being handed down from generation to generation as a precious heritage.

This hymnbook, first published by Trinity Church in St. Louis for its own use, was afterwards donated to the Missouri Synod and, except for some minor additions made since that time, is to this day the official German *Gesangbuch* of that body.

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ONE is our God and Father,  
The flock and all the shepherds cry;  
One Spirit all doth gather,  
One is our Lord, who reigns on high;  
One well of life doth lave us,  
One hope our souls inspires,  
One faith, one stay, doth save us,  
One love us ever fires,  
One peace our spirits blesses,  
One fight for our reward,  
One end of all distresses,  
One life in Christ, our Lord.

C. DOVING

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## 12

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### IN UNION THERE IS STRENGTH

*Now, I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that ye all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

1 Cor. 1:10.

It has been truly said: "To the *Lutheraner* belongs the credit and the glory of having paved the way for the organization of the Missouri Synod." How was it brought about, and what part did Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther have in it? Why could not the Saxon Lutherans join one of the existing synods in America? Let us answer the last question first and then the others.

Had the matter of truly orthodox Lutheranism not been so close to the heart of Ferdinand Walther and his asso-

ciates, it would have been a simple and almost natural step to join one of the synods composing the General Synod at that time. That body, however, organized at Hagerstown, Md., in 1820, was not a truly confessional Lutheran synod. What its character was may be seen from the following statement of Dr. J. G. Morris, who served several terms as president of that body:



*W. Hattstaedt*



*F. W. Husmann*

"Fifty years ago [in 1838], when there were fewer than 200 ministers in the Church, neither the Augsburg Confession nor any other creed was regarded as obligatory upon them. The large majority of them, however, were orthodox in the usual acceptation of the term; that is, they accepted the evangelical system of Christian doctrine, and a large proportion of them preached it faithfully. But many of them were not strictly Lutheran on the dogma of the Sacraments or at least did not attach much importance to it.

It never was a subject of discussion among them, and hence there was a great diversity of sentiment. Many of them were not thoroughly educated men, and they gave themselves no trouble concerning the distinguishing features of our faith. They were sturdy Lutherans in name as a party signal, but sadly latitudinarian in their theology."



F. A. Craemer

It was for this reason that Walther and his friends could not conscientiously unite with the existing Lutheran organizations. Through the correspondence with new friends in Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan, made by means of the *Lutheraner*, the desire was awakened to draw more closely together in a synodical organization. We have already mentioned F. C. D. Wyneken, who was serving an extensive mission field in Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan, Sihler of Pomeroy, Ohio, and

Craemer of Frankenmuth, Michigan. The latter two were men who had been sent to America by the Rev. Wm. Loehe of Neuendettelsau, Germany, to whom our Synod owes a great debt of gratitude for his self-sacrificing labors in behalf of the Church in America. Other Loehe men were A. Ernst, G. Burger, Wm. G. C. Hattstaedt, F. Lochner. Most of the Loehe men had joined the Ohio Synod, but had become dissatisfied with this body when they found that un-Lutheran practices were tolerated in it. So in September,

1845, they held a meeting at Cleveland, Ohio — Wyneken also was present — in which they severed their connection with the Ohio Synod and also discussed the question of a closer union with Walther and the Saxons. They decided to send a delegation to St. Louis to confer with these men. This meeting took place in St. Louis in May, 1846. Walther, Loeber, Keyl, Gruber, Schieferdecker, Buenger, and Fuerbringer of the Saxons were present, and the Loehe men were represented by Sihler, Ernst, and Lochner. A tentative draft of a synodical constitution was accepted and signed by those present, and it was agreed to hold another meeting in Fort Wayne in July of the same year to give the other friends in Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio an opportunity to discuss the plan.

At this meeting in St. Louis, Sihler, Ernst, and Lochner met Walther personally for the first time. What they saw and felt is interesting to us. Sihler, who was ten years older than Walther, wrote of this meeting in his autobiography: "Pastor Walther received us into his home most cordially, and his worthy wife, nee Buenger, was very hospitable. Undeniably Walther made the greatest impression on us; at that time not yet thirty-five, but with features that seemed to indicate a greater age, very likely in consequence of the many and heavy conflicts he had to pass through. His thoughts and words, however, were full of spirit and life. It was chiefly he who in our conferences was the enlivening and formative force in outlining the principles for an orthodox, that is, Lutheran, union of congregations, or synod. He thereby first manifested his remarkable talent for organization, of which I possess so little."



Trinity Church in St. Louis, at Walther's suggestion, began the discussion of the draft of a synodical constitution on May 11, 1846. Sihler and Lochner were astounded to find strong opposition in the congregation against the plan. They no doubt had imagined that Walther's word was law among his own members. They did not understand the strongly democratic character of Walther's parishioners and



*F. Lochner*



*C. J. H. Fick*

the depth of the Missouri "show mē" spirit which they had imbibed in a very short time.

Trinity Church in St. Louis devoted ten meetings to a careful discussion of the proposed constitution and on June 18 resolved to send its pastor to the proposed conference in Fort Wayne and to defray the expenses involved — \$50.

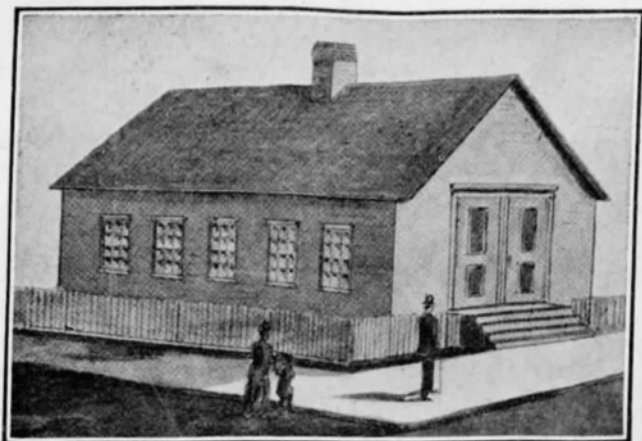
The July meeting in Fort Wayne brought together sixteen pastors from various parts of the Middle West, despite

the expenses and inconveniences of travel. This time the Saxons were represented by a delegation: Walther of St. Louis and Loeber of Altenburg. Brohm also attended, traveling all the way from New York City. It was the period before the Middle West could boast of railroads, and the easiest and most inexpensive mode of travel from St. Louis to Fort Wayne was by boat, down the Mississippi to the Ohio, up the Ohio to Cincinnati, and from there to Fort Wayne via the Miami and Erie Canal. A distance that can at present be covered comfortably in a day by automobile at that time consumed four days.

It was on this trip to Fort Wayne that Walther and the Rev. F. A. Craemer of Frankenmuth first met. Craemer traveled south by boat across Lake Erie to Toledo and from there via the Wabash Canal to Fort Wayne. The meeting took place at the Cincinnati Junction, about seventy miles from Toledo. Walther and his companions had arrived at the junction first and were waiting in the little inn for the arrival of the boat from Toledo. Craemer describes this memorable meeting as follows: "It did not take long, when a slender man, with a prominent nose and fiery eyes, stepped out of the door of the small inn, followed by a mild-looking tall man and a young student, who at once came aboard our boat. Of course, the former was Walther, the other the venerable Pastor Loeber and his son. The joy of the happy meeting was great on both sides, and soon, while we were riding along the canal easily and undisturbed, all were engaged in eager conversation. Thus I met Walther. It meant much to me to know personally and

more closely the man whom I, by his *Lutheraner*, had already recognized as a pillar of real Biblical Lutheran truth."

The meeting at Fort Wayne, at which Walther served as chairman, completed the preliminary labors on the constitution, and it was finally resolved to meet in Chicago in the following spring to organize a synod.



*First St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Chicago, Ill.*

On Jubilate Sunday, April 25, 1847, the organization meetings began which gave birth to the new Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. The opening service was held in the little frame church of the First St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Congregation, located at that time on the southwest corner of La Salle and Ohio streets in Chicago. The Rev. C. A. T. Selle was the pastor of this congregation.

Walther naturally was the leading spirit of the meetings that followed. The synodical constitution, carefully examined and re-examined, was then adopted. In it the reasons for the organization were stated as follows:

"1. The example of the Apostolic Church, Acts 15:1-31.

"2. The conservation and continuance of the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4:3-16; 1 Cor. 1:10) and a united effort to resist every form of schism and sectarianism (Rom. 16:17).

"3. The protection of pastors and congregations in the fulfillment of their duties and the maintaining of their rights.

"4. The endeavor to bring about the largest possible uniformity in church practice, church customs, and, in general, in congregational affairs.

"5. Our Lord's will that the diversities of gifts should be for the common profit, 1 Cor. 12:4-31.

"6. United effort to extend the kingdom of God and to make possible and to promote special aims of the synod (seminary, agenda, hymnbooks, Book of Concord, schoolbooks, distribution of the Bible, missionary activities within and without the Church, etc.)."

In the list of officers elected we meet with familiar names:

President: C. F. W. Walther.

Vice-President: Wm. Sihler, Ph. D.

Secretary: F. W. Husmann.

Treasurer: Mr. F. W. Barthel.

Examiners and Collocutors: G. H. Loeber and  
Wm. Sihler, Ph. D.

Corresponding Secretary for Foreign Connections:  
G. H. Loeber.

Chronologist: Ottomar Fuerbringer.

Mission Board: C. J. H. Fick, chairman;  
F. A. Craemer, secretary.

Committee for Publication of *Lutheraner*: J. F. Buenger  
and Mr. F. W. Barthel.

At the convention Walther offered his *Lutheraner* to the new Synod. It was gratefully accepted, and Walther was requested to serve as editor. Steps were also taken by the Synod to obtain control of two private theological institutions, so that these might be used for the education of ministers and teachers for the organization. These schools were the log-cabin college and seminary in Perry County, Missouri, and the school at Fort Wayne, built in 1846, under the direction of Dr. Wm. Sihler, with the financial aid of the Rev. Wm. Loehe of Neuendettelsau.

Space does not permit us to mention other details of the first convention of our beloved Synod, but it was a busy convention, and the foundations were carefully laid for the far-flung work of this body, which grew with phenomenal rapidity, until it has become one of the largest Lutheran church bodies in America.

Walther served as first President of the Synod until 1850, when he was succeeded by Wyneken; and when Wyneken asked to be relieved of the office in 1864, Walther was again elected, holding the position until 1878.

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HE who hath led will lead  
All through the wilderness;  
He who hath fed will feed;  
He who hath blessed will bless;  
He who hath heard thy cry  
Will never close His ear;  
He who hath marked Thy faintest sigh  
Will not forget thy tear.  
He loveth always, faileth never;  
So rest on Him today, forever.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

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## 13

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### LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace  
whose mind is stayed on Thee, because  
he trusteth in Thee.*  
Is. 26:3.

THE next two years in the life of Walther brought events some of which must have filled his heart with exceeding joy while others covered it with a pall of sadness. They were busy years; but so were they all, for Walther knew not how to be idle. He must ever be about his Father's business. They were important years for the new-born Synod.

In those first years the conventions of Synod were held annually. The second convention met in St. Louis, the third in Fort Wayne. At the St. Louis convention, in 1848, Synod decided to relocate the Perry County college and sem-

inary, which had been taken under synodical control with the consent of the interested congregations. St. Louis was chosen as the new location. Trinity Church pledged definite financial support for the institution, and when, at the Fort Wayne convention in 1849, it was resolved to arrange for



*J. A. F. W. Mueller*

First graduate of Concordia Seminary  
(1847)

the transfer of the school at once, the St. Louis congregations donated two acres of land, south of what was then the city limits, for that purpose.

These were important steps forward, but we can appreciate fully the liberality and wholehearted interest of the St. Louis Lutherans only if we know something about the untoward circumstances under which they were made, namely, during a time when the plague of cholera was laying low the citizens of St. Louis and one of the worst fires in the early history of our

country devastated almost the entire business section of the city. Walther's congregation was not unaffected by these two catastrophes.

The conflagration befell St. Louis in the spring of 1849. In a few hours 27 river steamers and 640 buildings had

been destroyed. On Exaudi Sunday Walther preached an eloquent sermon on the fire. We quote: "Revolutions of entire nations against their governments, bloody wars on land and sea destroying whole continents, and a pestilence covering the entire earth — these are the terrible preachers to whom God has now given the command, Go ye into all the world and preach repentance to all creatures! . . .

"A great and fearful calamity befell our city on the very day on which God's Word had been publicly derided. Hardly had the sound of the church bells on last Ascension Day and the prayers of the Christians died away when the clanging of the fire bells rang through the avenues and streets of our city. The night suddenly became as bright as day. In only a few hours hungry flames had destroyed most of the ships in our harbor and turned to ashes a number of the richest and busiest streets of our city. Thousands in a short time lost their homes and all their earthly possessions, some of them their lives either in the water or in the flames or by being miserably crushed and killed under the crumbling buildings. The power of the devastating element mocked at all human strength that tried to extinguish it and every human device that attempted to set a limit to its spread.

"When at last the night of terror ended and the sun of a new day lighted our unfortunate city, possessions worth millions had become the food of the devouring flames; and who could count the tears and sighs pressed out by the calamity? Ah, a number of our beloved members belong to those unfortunates who gaze amid tears upon the ash heaps into which their dwellings and all their possessions have been transformed!"



Gefänge  
zur  
Einweihung  
des  
deutschen evang.-lutherischen  
Concordia - Collegiums  
bei  
St. Louis, Mo.,  
am 11ten Juni,  
1850.

Front Cover of the Program for the Dedication of the  
New Concordia Seminary, June 11, 1850

## LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

Walther was attending the synodical meeting in Fort Wayne that summer when he received the news that a cholera epidemic was sweeping the city. Upon his return to his people so many St. Louisans had died that there



*First Building of Concordia College and Seminary at St. Louis*  
Dedicated June 11, 1850

were not enough wagons to carry away the dead. Walther and Buenger visited their sick and dying night and day, comforting and strengthening them with the Word of God. The Rev. F. Lochner, who was in St. Louis at the time, wrote that Walther held Wednesday afternoon prayer meet-

ings for his congregation during this period. "I attended one of them," he says. "It was precious!"

The summer of 1849 was eventful for Walther and Trinity Church for another reason. The electoral board of Synod placed Walther's name on the list of candidates for the theological professorship in the seminary and announced this fact in the *Lutheraner*. Trinity Church, on August 20, resolved by majority vote to protest against his candidacy, as it had no desire to lose him as pastor. Rev. J. F. Buenger, however, pointed out that Walther's outstanding gifts ought also to be devoted to the benefit of the Synod and the kingdom of God at large and that the congregation ought not to prevent this. He suggested that no doubt an arrangement could be made whereby both the congregation and Synod would enjoy the services of Walther.

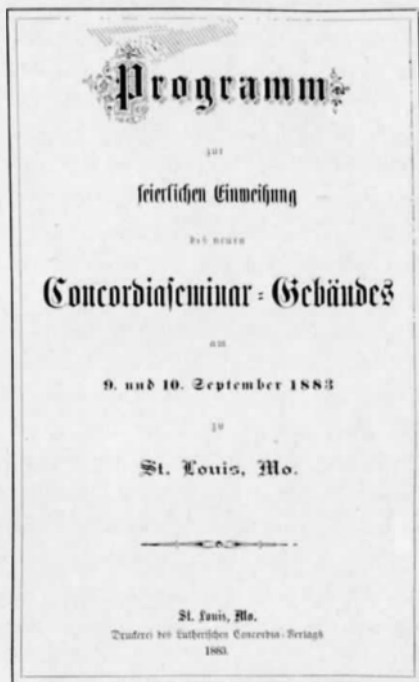
The upshot of the whole matter was that Walther, elected to the professorship at Concordia Seminary, accepted the call, but also remained pastor.

In this connection a few words should be added about the congregational arrangement in St. Louis at the time. In 1844 the pastoral work had become too burdensome for one man. The congregation therefore called Candidate J. F. Buenger, who had been serving as schoolteacher, as its assistant pastor, or "vicar." Walther was "first pastor," or *Oberpfarrer*. In 1847 a second congregational district was established, in the northern part of St. Louis. It was known as Immanuel District in distinction from Trinity District, and Buenger had sole charge of the pastoral work in it. Both pastors, however, regularly exchanged pulpits in order

to keep alive the consciousness among all members that they now as before formed but one congregation. The new Immanuel Church, located at Franklin Avenue and Eleventh Street, was dedicated on February 27, 1848.

When Walther accepted the call as professor, his congregation called the Rev. Friedrich Wyneken as "vicar" for Trinity and Walther remained "first pastor." This arrangement of districts continued, and Concordia, or Holy Cross, District was added in the southern part of St. Louis and Zion District in the northern part. Ultimately four churches formed one joint congregation. *Gesamtgemeinde* it was called.

Walther retained his position as chief pastor (*Oberpfarrer*) until his death, preaching at stated intervals, particularly on the high festivals, in the district churches and taking active part in the meetings of the board of elders.



*Title Page of Program for the Dedication  
of the Second Concordia Seminary,  
St. Louis, 1883*

Immanuel Church, located at Franklin Avenue and Eleventh Street, was dedicated on February 27, 1848.

On November 8, 1849, the cornerstone of the new seminary and college building in St. Louis was laid, Walther delivering the address. In January, 1850, he began his instruction of the students, temporarily, awaiting the completion of the new building, in his parsonage on Lombard Street, opposite Trinity Church. On June 4 he and his family, together with the students, moved into the new college and seminary building, and on June 11 the dedication ceremonies were held, Walther, in true academic style, delivering a Latin oration.

Thus the parent institution of our synodical educational system was established on the ground where it was to stand until the present Concordia Seminary was erected in the western part of St. Louis and dedicated in 1926. The larger building, which in 1883 took the place of the first one, for many years a prominent landmark in St. Louis, has also been torn down. Such changes are bound to occur in the course of time; but the ideals and principles which actuated the fathers in founding this school should never change. It will be worth while for the present and future generations to ponder the words with which Walther closed his address at the cornerstone laying of the first college and seminary building in St. Louis:

"May, then, also this building, for which we today are laying the cornerstone, be and remain an intelligible, though mute, witness to the fact that our Evangelical Lutheran Church faithfully and sincerely seeks to foster the arts and sciences; may both of these here find an undisturbed, quiet



*First Concordia Seminary, St. Louis*

South wing, dedicated 1850    Central section, dedicated 1858    North wing, dedicated 1852  
 The third floor of the two wings, erected c. 1871

place and grow up as a tree whose crown towers heavenward and whose branches droop earthward, whose fruits many may here gather diligently by sunlight and lamplight and then carry forth into the world! But may the arts and sciences at this place never become an idol to whom altars are built; may they rather be a means to the end that, also in this Western World, the Church may be built up on the foundation of the Prophets and the Apostles, be beautifully furnished, and bravely and victoriously defended, that the true enlightenment and welfare of the world be advanced, and, above all, that the glory of God be spread and His name be lauded and magnified to the end of days."

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FOR all the saints who from their labors rest,  
Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,  
Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blessed!  
Thou wast their Rock, their Fortress, and their Might;  
Thou, Lord, their Captain in their well-fought fight;  
Thou, in the darkness drear, their one true Light.

W. W. HOW

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## 14

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### PROFESSOR — THEOLOGIAN — WRITER

*Study to show thyself approved unto  
God a workman that needeth not to be  
ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of  
Truth.*

2 Tim. 2:15.

FOR about thirty-seven years Walther labored as professor of theology at Concordia Seminary. His courses covered almost the entire field of theological learning, although in later years, after the faculty had been sufficiently enlarged, he specialized in the field of doctrinal and pastoral theology. His principle was that theology is not a science in the modern sense of the term, but "a practical habitude of mind comprising the knowledge and acceptance of divine truth, together with an aptitude to



## THE STORY OF C. F. W. WALTHER

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instruct others in such knowledge, with a view to the acceptance of it, and to defend this truth against its adversaries."

Guided by his study of the writings of Martin Luther and other orthodox Lutheran fathers, Walther led his stu-



*C. F. W. Walther in Middle Age*

dents into the Scriptures and showed them how to interpret the sacred Word rightly. So strong was the power of his consecrated personality that it may be said without exaggeration that Walther left his imprint upon all the students that passed through the institution, and as almost all of these became pastors in the Missouri Synod, he wielded

a far-reaching influence upon all the congregations of that body.

One of the men fortunate enough to have been a student of Walther's wrote: "Happy were the young men who had the good fortune to be taught by him! In his very first lecture he would win their hearts by his kind and loving



*Artist's Conception of Walther Receiving the Degree of  
Doctor of Divinity, 1878*

words. He would lay bare to them their spiritual conditions and show them their future calling; and his telling words went home. . . . How to perform the functions of their sacred office properly, when to apply the Law and when the Gospel, and how to guide a congregation and lead it to a wider knowledge of its rights and duties he taught his students in his lectures on pastoral theology. . . . In his lectures on Friday evening he imparted much practical knowledge and sought to fill the hearts of his students with a holy, fervent zeal for their high and responsible calling."

Nine years before his death, in recognition of his great service in behalf of sound Lutheran theology, the Joint Synod of Ohio, through the faculty of its seminary in Columbus, Ohio, conferred upon Walther the degree of Doctor of Divinity. This synod had six years before co-operated with the Missouri Synod in organizing the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America. Previously Walther had declined this honorary degree when it was offered by the University of Goettingen, because he knew the faculty was not orthodox. Since the unity of faith with the Joint Synod of Ohio had been established, Walther accepted the degree as a token of good will, esteem, and confidence, although he modestly declared himself unworthy of the honor bestowed on him.

As the leading theologian of his Synod, Walther proved to be a great champion of true Lutheranism. He could not tolerate error. We have previously seen how in the Altenburg Debate he exposed false teaching and defended the truth. That was a slight foreshadowing of things that

were to come. In the course of his subsequent career he had to wage great battles in defense of sound Lutheranism.

His opponents in the three doctrinal controversies through which he led the Missouri Synod decried him as a man who loved strife and controversy, as though, figuratively speaking, he went about constantly carrying a chip on his shoulder. However, he was no lover of strife. He loved peace. But he hated error. And rather than permit error to gain a foothold in the Church he would fight.

Walther's old friend and colleague Prof. M. Guenther, from whose *Life of Walther* we have frequently quoted, calls him a "true peace theologian." That is the best name for this man, who wished nothing more fervently than to build the walls of Zion quietly. But when Zion was attacked and its safety endangered, he was ready to go forth into the conflict with unflinching heart, not for his own honor or benefit, but for the glory of God, the purity of the Word, and the welfare of the Church.



Prof. M. Guenther

The first of these controversies, which began in the early forties, was waged with the Rev. A. Grabau, founder of the old Buffalo Synod. The point at issue was the doctrine of the Church and the Ministry. Grabau's views may be summarized as follows: "That the Lutheran Church is a visible Church, outside of which no one can be saved; that a min-

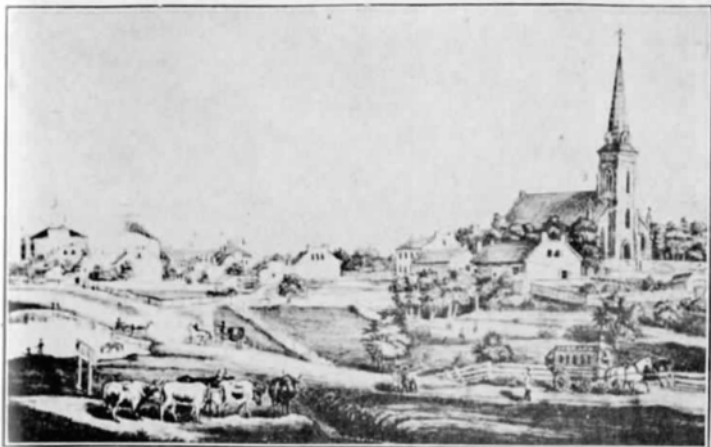
ister not called in accordance with the ancient *Kirchenordnungen* [church forms] was not properly called; that ordination by other clergymen was by divine ordinance es-



*The New "Old Trinity" Church, St. Louis*

sential to the validity of the ministerial office; that God would deal with us only through the ministerial office; that a minister arbitrarily elevated by the congregation was un-

able to pronounce absolution, and what he distributed at the altar was not the body and blood of Christ, but mere bread and wine; that through her Symbols and constitutions and synods the church at large must decide what is in accordance or at variance with the Word of God; that the



*The Territory on which was Located the First Concordia Seminary  
St. Louis, 1871*

Seminary at extreme left; Holy Cross Church at right, erected 1867

congregation is not the supreme tribunal in the Church, but the synod as representing the church at large; that the congregation is not authorized to pronounce excommunication; that Christians are bound to obey their minister in all things not contrary to the Word of God, for instance, in building a church, schoolhouse, or parsonage." The battle lasted until 1866, and the final result of Walther's

teaching and writing on the subject was that the majority of the Buffalo Synod was convinced of the truth, left their synod, and joined Missouri.

In the meantime differences of opinion on doctrinal questions arose between the Missourians and the Rev. Wm. Loehle of Neuendettelsau, Germany; the man who had sent



*Second Concordia Seminary, St. Louis*

Dedicated 1883

over men like Craemer and Sihler; the man who had supplied the money for the Practical Seminary built at Fort Wayne, Indiana, by Dr. Wm. Sihler; the man who had sent over a large number of men who had become pastors of Missouri Synod congregations. The doctrines involved concerned the ministerial office, millennialism, and the binding

force of the Lutheran Confessions. The differences with Loehe caused deep concern, because his great contributions to the work of the Missouri Synod were gratefully recognized. In order to prevent a rupture, Synod in 1851 invited Loehe to come to its convention in Milwaukee; and when Loehe could not come, it sent Walther and Wyneken to Germany to confer with him. This conference did not



*William Loehe*  
*of Neuendettelsau, Bavaria*

definitely settle the question. It was a memorable journey. Walther had occasion to visit again the scenes of his childhood and youth. Wyneken and he visited many of the great theologians of Germany and attended many conferences and meetings. They were everywhere most cordially received, and they made important contacts. The final break with Loehe came after their return home, in 1852. It was a sad blow in view of the many services Loehe had



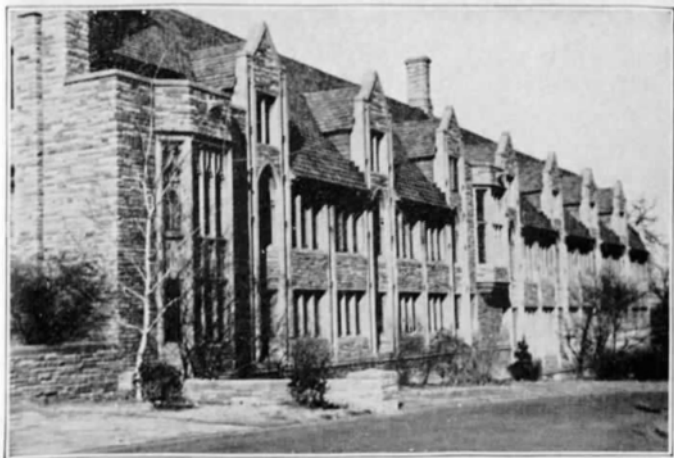
rendered the young Missouri Synod. Loehe in the future gave his support to the newly organized Iowa Synod, and the rupture between that synod and the Missouri Synod, after fruitless attempts to bring them together, finally became complete in 1867, when no understanding could be reached with the representatives of that body at the Milwaukee Colloquy.

The third great controversy was with the Iowa Synod and the Joint Synod of Ohio on the doctrine of Election and Predestination, as a result of which the Ohio Synod severed its connection with the Synodical Conference, which it had helped to organize in 1872. It was a bitter disappointment for Walther when this large body decided to go its own way, and the defection helped to cast a shadow of gloom upon his declining years; for one of his fond hopes, the hope of bringing about "one united Evangelical Lutheran Church of North America," was shattered thereby.

May it be said here that during the past quarter century sincere efforts have been made to reach a doctrinal agreement with the three synods mentioned above. In 1930 Buffalo, Iowa, and Ohio united to form the American Lutheran Church. It is the prayerful hope of many that the Missouri Synod and the Synodical Conference will ultimately reach a basis of accord with all those who earnestly desire to uphold orthodox and confessional Lutheranism in the world in doctrine and practice.

Walther wrote much. As editor of the *Lutheraner* for more than thirty years he published hundreds of articles. He also served as editor of a theological monthly, *Lehre*

*und Wehre* (founded in 1855). Hundreds of his sermons, addresses, prayers, essays, and conference papers were printed and widely distributed. His sermons were published in a half dozen volumes and earned for him a place in Dr. A. Broemel's collection of great preachers in the



*Wyneken Hall, Concordia Seminary*

Dedicated 1926

history of the Christian Church. Walther's *Pastoral Theology* was for years the authoritative work on that subject in a large part of the Lutheran Church of our country. His hymns and poems, a few of which we offer in translation in chapter 19, are evidence of his high gifts in the field of poetry.

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O BLESSED house where man and wife, united  
In Thy true love, have both one heart and mind;  
Where both to Thy salvation are invited  
And in Thy doctrine both contentment find;  
Where both, to Thee in truth forever cleaving,  
In joy, in grief, make Thee their only Stay  
And fondly hope in Thee to be believing  
Both in the good and in the evil day.

K. J. PHILIP SPITTA

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15

## HUSBAND AND FATHER

*But as for me and my house, we will  
serve the Lord.*

Josh. 24:15.

WE have thus far considered principally one side of Walther's life, his work as student, pastor, and theologian. However, his private life is equally interesting. Indeed, it sheds a particular luster upon his entire character, because it is so truly intimate and human and reveals to us how a Christian lives and loves. Fortunately many of Walther's letters have been preserved to us, not only those of an official nature, but also the more personal ones to the members of his family, among them also his most unique letter of proposal to the young lady who became his wife. We give this

letter in translation, in a later chapter, although we fully realize that the English form does not in any way do justice to the German original.

The letter is addressed to Miss Emilie Buenger, sister of Walther's student friend J. F. Buenger and of Otto Hermann Walther's wife, Agnes, who later was married to Rev. Ottomar Fuerbringer. The Buengers were descendants of an old family of ministers, which both on the father's and on the mother's side could trace its lineage back to the days of the Reformation. The father had died before the Saxon emigration. The widow and her unmarried children had been prevented from sailing in November, 1838, but followed in 1839, traveling via New York to St. Louis and thence to Perry County. Ferdinand Walther was, of course, well acquainted with this family.

After Ferdinand Walther had been established in his pastorate at Trinity in St. Louis, he wrote his letter of proposal. It is dated August 10, 1841. We have the young lady's letter of reply, in which she accepted him. Both letters are given, in English translation, in chapter 18 of this volume. They were united in holy wedlock on September 21, 1841, in Perry County, Walther's brother-in-law, the Rev. E. G. W. Keyl, performing the ceremony. They then traveled to St. Louis and occupied the parsonage on Poplar Street, between Second and Third streets, until they moved into the house on Lombard Street, opposite Trinity Church. They moved to their quarters in the new college and seminary building on June 4, 1850. Twenty years were spent in the rooms of the seminary. Not until 1870 did Walther move into a home, built by friends and afterwards purchased by Synod.

## THE STORY OF C. F. W. WALTHER

This union was blessed with six children: Christinê Magdalene (who became the wife of the Rev. Stephanus Keyl); Hermann Christoph; the twin boys, Konstantin and Ferdinand Gerhard; Emma Julie (who was married to the Rev. J. H. Niemann); and Christian Friedrich.



*Mrs. C. F. W. Walther in Later Years*

It was a happy marriage, which does not mean that crosses, trials, and tribulations did not come to them. These are bound to come. By 1852 they had buried their second and their last-born child. But the Lord who sends the clouds to the sky of the Christian always sends a rainbow along.

Walther's Emilie was well suited to him. Guenther, Walther's biographer, says of her: "She was a faithful disciple of the Lord, who adorned her faith with a quiet, devout life and proved it especially through her love of God's Word and through works of love and mercy. She was indeed and in truth a helpmeet to her husband for forty-four years."

Walther had written his Emilie in that first letter that he had no earthly fortune to offer her, and there is no question that they began housekeeping on a very small and modest scale. The Rev. F. Lochner, who a few years later married Lydia Buenger, a sister of Emilie's, describes the Walther household as he saw it on his first visit to St. Louis in 1846: "How modest, not to say poor, were our dear host's outward circumstances! Opposite the old Trinity Church, where the Saxony Mills now stand, there was a small two-story brick house. . . . Walther lived on the lower floor, which he had rented. This lower part consisted of a living room, which at the same time was a bedroom for him, his wife, and two children, a small adjoining summer kitchen, and his study. The latter, at the same time, also served as the guest chamber. When the time to go to sleep came, the lounge was opened to serve as a double for Dr. Wm. Sihler and the Rev. O. Fuerbringer, and from under it a low frame (trundle bed) drawn forth as a resting place for the Rev. A. Ernst and myself. Mornings, during breakfast, the transformation of the improvised bedroom into a study took place."

There are a number of letters extant that vividly show Walther's concern for his wife and children during the early days of the Civil War, when Missouri was the battleground

of much guerrilla warfare. On account of the attacks threatening the city of St. Louis, he had sent his loved ones into Jefferson County, Missouri. One letter to them, dated May 10, 1861, opens with the greeting: "My precious Emilie! God's grace, peace, comfort, help, and protection be with you and all our dear children for the sake of Jesus Christ, our beloved Savior. Amen. The conflict, as I have just heard, has already begun here, but far from the college. The arsenal and the marine hospital have been deserted except for a few men. . . . Do not fear for my safety, however. Without God's will no sparrow will fall and no hair from our head; why should we, then, fear? I am where God has placed me; I walk not my own, self-chosen ways; and so the promise will not be taken from me 'I will send My angel before thee,' etc." In this manner he continues to speak words of comfort and encouragement and then concludes: "I am and remain, in the hope of seeing you soon, your faithful husband and faithful father and intercessor of the dear children C. F. W. Walther."

In another letter to his wife, dated a fortnight later, he describes many little details of the household which would naturally be of special interest to his Emilie: The garden is doing nicely under the care of Mrs. Hefele, the housekeeper; she has brought the cow back and is making butter for us. He thinks the political situation has improved and that it will be safe enough for her and the children to come home. If she should decide to come home, she should by all means travel by train. He is not sure if she has enough funds. She must write in the event her money on hand is insufficient. He concludes with the admonition that the

children should be diligent and not neglect their prayers; particularly should they be loving toward one another; for if they do not love one another, they cannot love God and are not in His grace.

His love for children, manifested toward his own, continued in rich measure toward his grandchildren later on. In a letter to his daughter Magdalene (Lenchen), who had married Stephanus Keyl, he wrote, as she was looking forward to the privilege of Christian motherhood:

"Reflect, is it not a great privilege that God should hold you worthy to give life and existence to an immortal being, called to eternal life and already dearly redeemed through Christ? And when the dear infant is happily born into the world, that is a greater event than one thinks. For then the child is there in order that it may know God for all eternity, to praise Him, and to be blessed forever. If God were to give you a million dollars, that would be a gift far inferior to that of such a little child."

We are tempted to quote from many other letters, but space does not permit. One, however, which especially reveals the delight Walther took in children, we shall give in translation in chapter 18.

When his beloved Emilie was taken from his side by death in 1885, not quite two years before his own, he wrote these touching words to his children:

"Her memory will be blessed as long as there will be people who knew her. Enemies she had none. My tears indeed flowed plentifully; for what I have lost in this faithful helpmeet cannot be put into words. But the more I think of it that she, next to God, lived and worked day and



night only for me, the more I must refuse to begrudge it to her that she is now entered into her rest and that her works do follow her. Oh, that I had only honored her more than I did in the press of the labors of my calling! That greatly humbles me; but her graciously looking upon me was to me a comforting absolution. Oh, how I rejoice soon to see her again!"

Solomon, by the Holy Spirit, wrote in praise of a godly wife and mother: "Her price is above rubies." Walther's Emilie was even such a precious jewel to him.

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How fine has the day been, how bright was the sun,  
How lovely and joyful the course that he run,  
Though he rose in a mist when his race he begun  
And there followed some droppings of rain!  
But now the fair traveler's come to the west,  
His rays are all gold and his beauties are best;  
He paints the sky gay as he sinks to his rest  
And foretells a bright rising again.

Just such is the Christian. His course he begins  
Like the sun in a mist while he mourns for his sins  
And melts into tears; then he breaks out and shines  
And travels his heavenly way.  
But when he comes nearer to finish his race,  
Like a fine setting sun, he looks richer in grace  
And gives a sure hope at the end of his days  
Of rising in brighter array.

ISAAC WATTS

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## 16

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### UNTO THE PERFECT DAY

*The path of the just is as a shining light,  
that shineth more and more unto the  
perfect day.*

Prov. 4:18.

AFTER Walther had laid away his beloved wife, he seemed to realize that his own end was not far off. His work was done, and he longed for the rest which God has prepared for the saints. Though he did not cease his usual activities, they were performed as by one who is preparing for a long journey and is setting his house in order.

In the year after his wife's death he visited his children in New York, the Keyls, telling them that it was his last visit. From there he traveled to Cleveland and visited his daughter, Mrs. J. H. Niemann, and attended the sessions of the Central District, which was assembled at the church of his son-in-law. Though he was far from well, he took an active part in the doctrinal discussions. From Cleveland he went to Detroit for the convention of the Synodical Conference, August 11–16. His physical condition grew worse. He returned home a sick man; but he refused to give up. When the Western District convened at St. Louis, October 13–19, he was present for the purpose of completing a series of essays which he had begun thirteen years before, on the theme "The Fact that Only by the Doctrine of the Lutheran Church All Glory is Given to God an Incontrovertible Proof that Its Doctrine Alone Is the True Doctrine."

Prof. M. Guenther, Walther's colleague and biographer, was also present at this convention. He describes Walther's physical condition as greatly weakened by fever; that he had to muster all his powers in order to speak; that one wished someone else had taken over the essay for him; that, on the other hand, one could not begrudge him the pleasure of concluding his theme. "It was a pitiable sight, but at the same time the picture of a man tirelessly, without regard for himself, laboring for God's cause. Was it not a grand theme that he was bringing to a close, the theme of his whole life: 'To God alone be all glory!'"

Then Guenther adds: "Deeply moved and with sobs Walther ended his essay with the words: 'Now we are at

an end with our theses, in which it was shown that our Lutheran Church in all these doctrines gives all glory to God and never ascribes to the creature the glory which belongs to the great God. Whatever belongs to God she gives to Him fully. Now may the dear God help that we may not only be glad to belong to such a Church, but that we may also give Him all glory by our faith, profession, life, suffering, and death! Our life's motto must be: *Soli Deo Gloria!* O Lord Jesus, grant us Thy help thereto! Amen."

Walther's condition did not improve. Still he continued his work at the Seminary, although urged to spare himself. On October 25 he celebrated his birthday. He had reached the three-quarter century mark. When students, colleagues, relatives, and friends came to congratulate him, he received them in his usual courteous and



*Prof. G. Stoeckhardt, D. D.*

kindly manner, but apparently with great effort. Finally he was persuaded to discontinue his lectures in the classroom.

Though he had the privilege of observing the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination on January 17, 1887, upon which occasion he was showered with congratulatory messages from near and far and received a special gift from the pastors of Synod, it was evident to all that he would not recover. Gradually losing strength, he lingered on



*Walther Mausoleum in Concordia Cemetery,  
St. Louis*

until May. The end came while the Missouri Synod was in convention at Fort Wayne. The Rev. G. Stoeckhardt, his colleague and pastor, was at his bedside on Friday evening, May 6, and, after praying with him, asked him whether he was ready to die upon the grace of Christ which he had preached all his life. The audible answer was, "Yes." On the following evening, Saturday, May 7, at 5:30, the Lord took His weary servant home to the eternal rest of the children of God.

We need not describe in detail the many services in connection with the funeral, the memorial services held throughout the Synodical Conference, nor mention the many representatives of synods and institutions who came to pay their respects to the departed. Guenther states: "In no funeral services of a theologian in America did so many theologians take part. The city of St. Louis has hardly seen a larger funeral." He was "carried to his grave like a prince and a great one of the kingdom of God!"

Today, after more than half a century has passed since his death, the Walther Mausoleum in Concordia Cemetery, placed over his and Emilie's graves by loving friends in 1892, is still visited by many Lutherans who come to St. Louis.

The number of those who knew Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther personally is dwindling from year to year. Before long none of them will remain. The Synod and its institutions which he helped to establish are still faithful to the great Scriptural principles which he labored so long and valiantly to uphold. May God in His grace grant that this

loyalty may continue and that his memory may ever be cherished as that of a faithful servant of Jesus Christ and as a great gift to the Lutheran Church in America!

*"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation"*

### PRAYER

God of our fathers, hear us as we pray:

Grant us such faith in Thee, such love of truth,

As filled the leaders of our Church's youth

And spurred them to their work for Christ each day.

Endue us with a vision that can see

Beyond the present and can view

The shining goal of all the tasks we do —

A happy and blest eternity.

God of our fathers, help us through the years

To do the work the fathers have begun,

So that our part in it may be well done

Despite our weaknesses, our doubts, our fears;

Till we at length, with father pioneers,

Are gathered at the right hand of Thy Son. Amen.

W. G. POLACK

SOLI DEO GLORIA

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## WALTHER

As youth he entered into reason's school,  
Where human thought and wisdom had the rule;  
But God, who gave the keen and brilliant mind,  
His intellect to Christ, the Truth, confined.

His life was earnest, honest to the core;  
Yet humbly would he oft his sins deplore;  
Before both God and man he did confess:  
Christ's merit saves and not man's righteousness.

He taught with tongue, with printed page and pen,  
That God by grace in Christ saves sinful men;  
That to the local church the power is given  
To use the means of grace and keys of heaven.

Whenever error threatened Zion's hill,  
He stood, not seeking praise, not fearing ill,  
And, wielding but the Word's two-edged sword,  
Contended for the honor of his Lord.

He fought the good, the valiant fight of faith,  
Like Paul and Luther, loyal unto death.  
Life-crowned he stands before his Father's face,  
Saved not by works, through faith, alone by grace.

ARTHUR T. BONNETT

*in Lutheran Witness at the centennial  
of Walther's birth, 1911*

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## 17

## TRIBUTES AND REMINISCENCES

### CHARACTER SKETCH OF WALTHER

BY DR. WM. SIHLER

A man who has passed through a severe school of affliction, who has, through devout and diligent study of the Scriptures, of Luther's writings, and of the writings of the later dogmaticians, thoroughly liberated himself in every



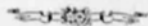
way from the shackles of Stephanism and attained the soundly Lutheran position; a man endowed with remarkable acuteness of intellect and with practical common sense; a born leader in congregational affairs; altogether sincere, straightforward, honest; a man willing to spend himself utterly for others when the glory of God and the welfare of the Church are at stake; strong and steadfast in confession and also in the application of confession to life; a firm opponent of those who wilfully adulterate the truth, patient and charitable towards those who err from ignorance.

### REMINISCENCES OF THE REV. C. EISSFELDT

Long before I sat at his feet as a theological student, I had been privileged to become acquainted with this venerable man. During the years of my childhood, Professor Walther was a regular guest at the home of my parents as often as he came to Milwaukee to attend synodical or other church meetings. I can still see him standing before the door of our house and, when this was opened, greeting with a deep bow the lady of the house. On every occasion, at table and during the conversations, Walther invariably remained the polite and refined Saxon, going so far as to thank us children very cordially for any favor that we had done for him. This politeness filled our hearts with high respect and sincere admiration.

Just as deeply were we impressed by his mighty standing collar, called *Vatermoerder*, ornamented with an immense white tie, which, as far as length was concerned, might have served as a scarf. We children were not afraid of Walther; for in his association with children he was invariably cor-

# Zeugniß.



Daß Herr Julius Johannes August Friedrich  
gebürtig von Huntington, Ind.  
seit 1. September 1884 bis 20. April 1887  
in dem hiesigen Concordia-Seminar der deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen  
Synode von Missouri, Ohio u. a. St. dem Studium der Theologie mit  
ganzem Fleiße obgelegen, sich dabei eines ausgesprochenen  
Wandels befließigt und in dem vorschrittmäßig mit ihm angestellten öffent-  
lichen Examen pro Candidatura zu Uebernahme des heiligen Predigamts als  
sehr gut vorbereitet sich erwiesen habe; solches wird demselben  
unter Anvrünschung göttlichen Segens hierdurch nach Pflicht und Gewissen  
bezeugt.

St. Louis im Staate Missouri den 21. April 1887

Das Lehrercollegium:

Sehr Ehl. El. von  
(2. d. 1. 1887)

G. Kufert.  
M. Guntz.  
H. Ruer.  
R. Lange.  
L. Thielmann.

Last Diploma Signed by Dr. Walther Before His Death

dial and friendly, so that we felt drawn towards him. Still a certain feeling of respect prevented intimacy on our part.

Altogether different we felt towards another noted man, who also, especially as long as he was President, was a regular guest in the home of my parents. I refer to President Friedrich Wyneken. He also was always a gentleman, but his whole nature and bearing and his attitude toward us was of a kind that we children felt not the slightest embarrassment in his presence. With a hearty laugh he used to say, whenever he came to our house, "Good day, Mrs. Eissfeldt, here I am again" (*"Tag, Frau Eissfeldt; da bin ich wieder"*). We children served as bootblacks for all the guests at our home. (At that time all males, old and young, wore high boots.) Some of the guests placed their boots before the door of their room in the evening. Wyneken, however, never did that. In the early morning hours I therefore would slip quietly into the room and get his boots. Not always was I successful. I remember that, when one morning I quietly opened the door, Wyneken stood in the room fully dressed and with a resounding laugh exclaimed, "A respectable grenadier never surrenders his boots" (*"Ein ordentlicher Grenadier gibt nie seine Stiebeln von sich"*).

To return to Dr. Walther. If any one hears or reads of Walther's astounding activity as teacher and spiritual leader, he might imagine that Walther was interested only in theology and theological matters. That is absolutely beside the mark. Walther was a *connoisseur* in music. For several years, especially toward the end of the sixties, he personally conducted a musical circle. He was also a master at the organ. On the high festivals he usually played the

organ at Old Trinity, and it was a rare treat to listen to the wonderful improvisations, which admirably served to create in the audience the proper devotional spirit. Whenever he was a guest of my parents, my dear mother, who was a singer of note, had to sit down at the piano after supper and sing a number of songs. Among the melodies that Walther loved to hear time and again were the well-known aria from Handel's *Messiah* "I Know that My Redeemer Liveth" and also the aria by J. S. Bach *Mein gläubiges Herze, frohlocke*. As student I also had occasion to convince myself of his mastery at the piano. He and Mrs. Walther were guests at a rather large party given at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Leonhardt, which was also my home during my years of study at St. Louis. In the course of the evening Mother Leonhardt asked me, "Can you not prevail upon Walther to play the piano?" When I approached him, Walther declared, "No, no, I am altogether out of practice." Selecting a transcription for four hands of Beethoven's *Symphony in D Major*, I showed it to Walther. He glanced over the first few pages, humming the melody. "Ah," he said, "that is wonderful," and kept on humming. Then he said, "Well, we may try a page or two." So we sat down at the piano, and soon Walther became enthusiastic. He forgot that he wanted to try only one page. More and more spirited became his playing, so that I had trouble to follow him, and the perspiration dripped from my forehead. Oblivious of his surroundings, Walther kept on playing till he reached the brilliant *finale*. Behind us sat a well-known lady. Before the guests could applaud, she exclaimed with a deep sigh, "Oh, how long!" There-

upon Walther turned to me and, drawing up his eyebrows in comic despair, said, "You see, there we have it." . . .

I can still see him standing before me in his study, in his gray dressing gown, his long German pipe in one hand and in the other a long *Fidibus* (a long strip of paper rolled together, resembling somewhat the straws served at soda fountains, and used in place of matches). These *Fidibuses* Dr. Walther used to light his long pipe. To watch this procedure was to me always an interesting amusement. After Walther had filled his pipe with tobacco, he took one of the *Fidibuses*; but before lighting it at the stove or over the lamp, he used it to emphasize his remarks with lively gestures. When he had succeeded in lighting it, he frequently, in his lively conversation, forgot to light his pipe till the flame of the burning *Fidibus* came into too close proximity to his fingers. Discarding this *Fidibus*, another one was picked up, again lit, and now, remembering that the *Fidibus* was to be used for lighting his pipe, he held it somewhere near the mouth of his pipe, but looking straight into the eyes of his companion, he did not notice that it was inches away from its object. So at times three or four *Fidibuses* were used before he finally succeeded in lighting his pipe. Mama Walther, however, always had an ample supply of these useful articles on hand.

Translation by Th. Laetsch,  
in *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*

## REMINISCENCES OF THE REV. JUL. A. FRIEDRICH

On April 20, 1887, I had passed my theological examination in order to follow a call of the Mission Board of the Western District to Chattanooga, Tennessee. I wished to

have Walther's signature on my diploma if possible. Prof. F. Pieper, who issued the diploma, did not believe that my wish could be fulfilled, since Walther had not written a word for many months and was now apparently at the point of death. But nevertheless I resolved to try. My request for permission to call on the Doctor was kindly granted by his son, the Rev. F. Walther, who attended his father. On the afternoon of April 21, I was ushered into the sickroom. Never will I forget the scene which met my eye. There lay the man who but a few months ago had spoken to us with fiery eloquence concerning the mysteries of God, withered and emaciated, barely able to raise his hand. When I stepped to the bedside, Walther raised his hand slightly and said, "God greet you!" I told him that I was to enter the holy ministry and had now come to take leave of him. His son then asked him whether he could sign my diploma, and he answered, "Yes." Pastor Walther raised him up in bed and put his arm around him while I, kneeling before the bed, held the diploma up to him on a folio. But when he was given the pen, he had evidently forgotten what he was expected to do, and so his son, pointing to the diploma, said: "You are to write your name here under the word *Lehrerkollegium*" (Faculty). But instead of writing his name, he wrote an abbreviation of the words *Lehrerkollegium* and then an illegible word, which Professor Guenther thought might mean *Christum*. I had almost given up hopes of securing the signature, when his son said: "Papa, you must write your name — C. F. W. Walther." Summoning all his strength, Walther now wrote out his name, looked at the signature for a few moments, and then sank back on his pillow, completely exhausted. When I took leave of

him, he lifted up his right hand as though he would bless me and said, "God bless you and grant you His Holy Spirit!" I now proceeded to leave the room; but when I was near the door, I turned to look once more upon the man who had rescued my soul from despair and saved me from perdition, and I heard him say with a faint voice, "God keep you! A safe journey!" Twenty-two days later, on May 12, when on the way to my charge in Chattanooga, I passed through St. Louis and stood at the bier of my beloved teacher. He had gone to the rest of God's saints. But my diploma, a facsimile of which will be found on another page, bears the *last signature of Dr. C. F. W. Walther*. As often as I look at it, I seem to hear the benediction of this great man of God: "God bless you and grant you His Holy Spirit!" And as I pen these lines in loving memory of my venerable teacher and friend, the passage of Holy Writ comes to my mind:

"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation," Heb. 13:7.

From *Ebenezer*

### A TRIBUTE TO WALTHER'S LOYALTY

The man who was God's instrument to set the Missouri Synod on the solid rock of the Word of God, and who labored day and night to keep it there, was none other than its chief founder, namely, Dr. C. F. W. Walther, who did nothing else than to breathe into this body his own spirit and understanding as regards the *sola Scriptura* (the Scriptures alone).

DR. F. BENTE

in *Lehre und Wehre*, Vol. 56

DR. F. PIEPER'S TRIBUTE TO WALTHER

Walther, during his entire activity as a teacher stood for the old church doctrine of inspiration with the fullest conviction, and designated the giving up of this doctrine as the falling away from Christianity in principle. . . . Walther, as respects spiritual experience, theological learning, logical acumen, and the gift of presentation, certainly does not rank below most of our theologians, and, in our judgment, he surpasses many of them in these things.

*Lehre und Wehre, Vol. 33*



*Dr. F. Pieper*

Walther's successor as president of Concordia Seminary

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF  
C. F. W. WALTHER

Prof. C. F. W. Walther was such a master of everything that he scarcely ever made a mistake. And making mistakes so seldom, he, like many others, probably got the idea un-



consciously and unintentionally that he could make no mistake. He seemed to like opposition and argument, if the opponent was capable of using argument. He respected a man that was capable of defending his views, though differing diametrically from his own. He had, for example, a high regard for Dr. Benjamin Kurtz although he was the sharpest opponent and severest critic that he perhaps ever encountered. It was not often that he would suspend the lash or lay it aside with the confession that he was wrong. I remember, however, one or two instances in which he retreated from his positions during my interviews with him. One was in reference to the homiletics of all American ministers, and the other was upon the claim of superiority for the German style of preaching. He took the position that no American clergyman knew how to sermonize. He condemned all for what he had observed in a few. He insisted that they merely took a text as a *motto*, but never confined themselves to its discussion, and failed to preach the true Gospel of Christ crucified. He instanced in defense of his criticism the sermon that I preached for him and his young people in the English language, criticising it most unmercifully. I endured the unjust and untruthful denunciation for a while in shame and mortification, and then suddenly rose upon him in the fiercest kind of self-defense. I said: "Professor, your accusations are false, and I will not allow you to make them again! You are too little acquainted with the English language to criticise an English sermon by merely hearing it."

He attempted to interrupt me, but I had risen to my feet, and said, "Hold on now, if you please, till I am through."

You did not comprehend my sermon, and you are not capable of comprehending English sermons, and especially *written* ones! Now, I shall not leave this floor, although it is in your house, until I have convinced you that you are wrong, and compelled you to take back your sweeping denunciation that we Americans know nothing about homiletics and proper sermonizing."

Very fortunately I had a dozen German sermons and skeletons of sermons in my satchel, and I produced them and, throwing them upon his table, exclaimed, "Now, Professor, criticise those German sermons and skeletons, in candor and honesty." He took up the first one, which was upon the text: "*Kaufe Wahrheit, und verkaufe nicht.*" He read it through and smiled, saying, "I can find no fault with this; it is very good." He then took the others and, looking over them carefully, exclaimed, "They are all very good, I can find no fault with any of them. I beg your pardon for the injustice!" It put him in the very best humor, and he was more cordial than ever. Then I turned on the German homiletics. I had heard one of the German professors preach upon the miracle of the *Loaves and Fishes*, in the morning; and he left the text and took as a theme the Providence of God, ignoring the plan of salvation altogether, and Christ as the Bread of Life. "Now," said I, "where is Luther's definition of a sermon, and the proper homiletical division of the text?" The Professor was silent and grave. He was caught and was willing to drop the subject.

In reference to the formation of English Lutheran churches, Prof. Walther was far in advance of his brethren

of the Missouri Synod. He was at one time very enthusiastic upon the subject. But he found some difficulties in the way, and instead of exercising his usual indomitable perseverance and unflinching determination in this matter as he did in other matters, he allowed himself to be halted and turned aside, waiting for a more convenient season. This, however, must here be recorded as a matter of history, that he made the first effort toward the establishment of an English Lutheran church in St. Louis. His effort was rather feeble, it is true, and failed of success. But it still remains true that he thought of the matter and that it gave him great anxiety. He corresponded with me upon the subject before any one else did anything, and actually made the attempt to bring it into speedy materialization by calling me to his aid before the General Synod had as yet said or done anything toward entering upon the work. It was with this object in view that I visited St. Louis and preached for the young people of the German churches. Professor Walther himself arranged all the preliminaries. He rented the hall of the Sanitary Commission for the purpose and paid for it, published the notice in all the German and English daily papers of the city, had it announced in all the German churches of the synod in St. Louis, took his own carriage and conducted me to see some of the people privately who were supposed to be favorable to the enterprise, and finally accompanied me to the hall, taking me in his own private conveyance to the place of meeting. He went so far as to appoint a meeting on Monday night in one of their school-houses for the purpose of definite action in the organization of an English church. But at this point the failure occurred.

The attendance was so slim on Monday night that the Professor took it as an indication that the effort was premature and that the young people were really not so desirous of an English Lutheran church as had been supposed.

At all events, nothing was done. The work was suspended. Professor Walther said he would cause a canvass of all the German congregations to be made and the names of all the young that desired English to be gathered into a list, and then he would send for me and make another effort. Time passed, however, imperceptibly, and the movement was not carried to completion. Then the effort of the General Synod to explore the ground and organize super-vened, and the Missouri Synod's English organization was abandoned. There seemed to be some difficulties in the way that might be remedied by waiting a while. The absence of English Lutheran literature and books of instruction and worship, especially of a hymnbook, was one of these difficulties. The Missourians would not use any hymns, either German or English, except such as were composed by sound, orthodox Lutherans! Such hymns were scarce, and if any existed, they were not in a suitable collection. If here and there one might be found, in some existing collection that was acceptable, it was associated with others that were un-Lutheran and quite objectionable because unionistic and tolerant of error. The same difficulty was encountered in the absence of an English Lutheran catechism authorized by the Missouri Synod. Neither were there any liturgical forms whatever in English accepted and adopted by the synod. Professor Walther gave me his own private copy of the Liturgy to translate, and also a

copy of Luther's Smaller Catechism, or Enchiridion, upon which some work had been done by Rev. J. Clemens Miller of Baltimore, lately deceased.

Before any progress could be reported in the translation of these important books, new developments in ecclesiastical affairs set everything in different shape, and intercepted the great desire of Professor Walther in the accomplishment of these works. The General Synod started an English mission in St. Louis. A call for a convention of confessional Lutherans to form a general body upon the Unaltered Augsburg Confession reached and interested for a time even the Missouri Synod, until new questions, not of faith but of practice, were sprung upon the Church, and the lines were drawn around the so-called "Four Points" in such a manner as to throw everything else aside. Doctrines and languages and catechisms and hymnbooks and city missions and everything was trampled under foot for the time being by the four-footed monster that rose out of the sea — the sea of imagination perhaps — called *Chiliasm*, *Secret Societies*, *Pulpit Fellowship*, and *Altar Fellowship*. Unfortunately, in this manner the contemplated improvements in the Missouri Synod looking toward the use of the English language were suffered to lapse for a time into solemn and silent desuetude, and I sadly regret to say that I never met Professor Walther again to the day of his death.

Nevertheless, at this late day, I gladly lay a tribute of high honor and sincere regard upon the memory of one of the noblest and most remarkable men of the nineteenth century. He was by no means infallible; neither was Martin Luther. He made mistakes, and so do all men. But he

was certainly ordained of God for a great purpose. He was guided by an unseen hand, as all great men are and always have been, for the accomplishment of high and grand missions to the glory of Almighty God. Those peculiarities for which he was so often condemned, though not justifiable in others, were justifiable in him. And instead of his severity, exclusiveness, and uncompromising dogmatism being great blemishes, I verily believe that they were his greatest ornaments — simply because they were weapons that God put into his hands to accomplish a work in the overthrow of Rationalism, Romanism, and Latitudinarianism, that could be accomplished in no other way.

The whole life of Professor Walther was a rebuke and a protest against error. If, however, he had been merely a controversialist and dogmatician, highly accomplished in the science of polemics, we might indeed admire him, but still not feel the affection and reverence for him that thousands do. But above all other qualities, that which gave the highest crown of distinction was his sincere, childlike, and simple Scriptural piety. It was of the Arndt's True Christianity type. Criticism falls to the ground in such a presence. We see in it the image of the Holy One. Such a man was Prof. C. F. W. Walther, D. D.

S. L. HARKEY, D. D.

in the *Lutheran Observer*

NOTE. — We have been unable to establish definitely the time when the author made the effort to establish an English congregation in St. Louis. However, drawing conclusions from his reference to the later founding of the General Council (1866–1867) and the controversy on the Four Points, it must have been prior to 1866.

W. G. P.

## EXCERPTS FROM WALTHER'S LETTERS AND WRITINGS

### WALTHER'S LETTER OF PROPOSAL AND THE ENSUING CORRESPONDENCE

St. Louis, August 10, 1841

DEAR, HEARTILY BELOVED EMILIE: <sup>1</sup>

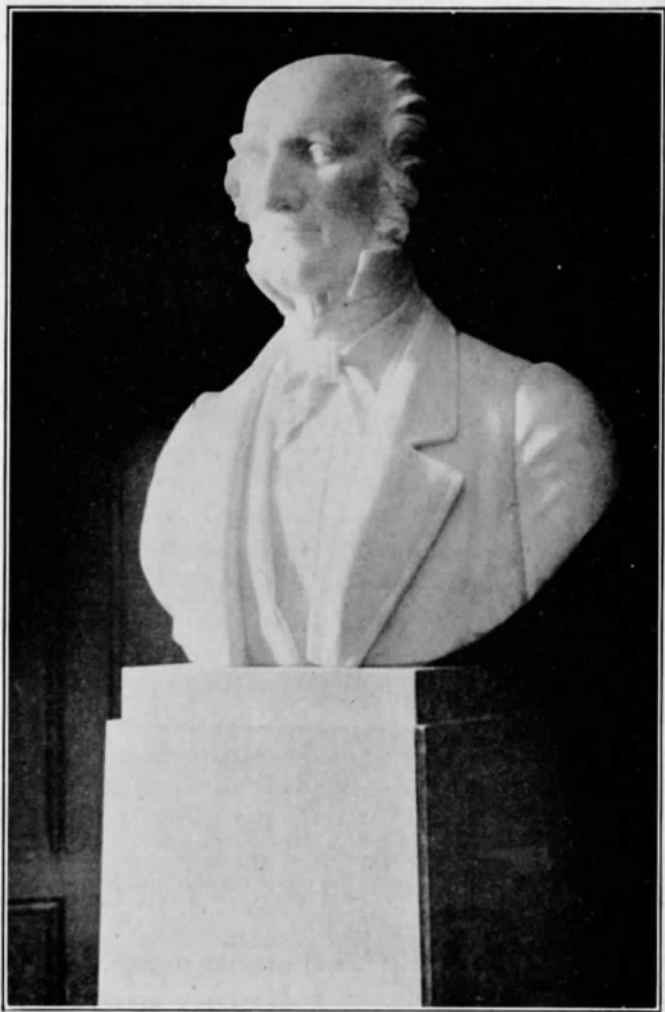
As little as I have till now had the right, and particularly with such a greeting, to write to you, yet I cannot do otherwise if I am to be honest with you. Nearly two years have gone by, as you will perhaps recall, since I, through your dear brother Fritz, at least indicated a precious, sublime wish of my heart, which no one in the world but you can fulfill. But how wonderful have been the ways on which our dear heavenly Father has led me during the past two years! I do not need to tell you anything of this; my life has passed before your own. Only this much must I confess, that I often, with deep misery of my soul, felt forced to believe that God's dark leadings were a sign that it was not His holy will to grant me the dearest wish I have in this world.

<sup>1</sup> Miss Emilie Buenger, the sister of Walther's friend J. F. Buenger.

However, also in me the promise of Ps. 103 has been fulfilled: "He will not always chide; neither will He keep His anger forever." God has turned His friendly countenance toward me once more, and trustfully I have therefore again laid my old wish at the feet of my God and Savior. I have also poured out my heart to your dear mother. So you alone remain, whose yes or no will reveal to me the will of my gracious God.

Therefore I cannot wait any longer to express this my wish frankly to you. It is this: Will you, dearest Emilie, become my life companion? Can you return, at least in some degree, the love for you which, as I now confidently hope, God has enkindled in my heart? Do you believe that you can live with me happily, contentedly, and in a God-pleasing union as intimate and inseparable unto death as the holy estate of matrimony is? I do not believe that any explanations on my part are necessary, as if you first had to become acquainted with me. You know me, my character, my faith, my failings and weaknesses, my circumstances; you know that you will find no temporal fortune, no honor before the world, no assured future with me; I can therefore only add my pledge that you will have in me a spouse who will love you dearly and by God's grace faithfully. I have no one whom I could ask to speak for me to you; I have therefore prayed the dear Lord Himself to be my Eliezer and to direct your heart according to His will and to our mutual temporal and eternal welfare. Follow His guidance and then inform me by return messenger of your God-directed decision.





*Marble Bust of Walther in Faculty Room of Concordia Seminary*

As communication between here and Perry County is often long interrupted, you will not, as I hope for your love, think ill of me for making the following suggestion. If you can, in God's name, say yes to my question, then we shall look upon your declaration as the completion of our betrothal, as your dear mother today, and my good mother in Germany, already in advance, have given their parental consent thereto. I would therefore in this event not come to Perry County before our marriage. If it is agreeable to you, I should like to have the publication of the banns of marriage made in Frohna and here on the 13th, 14th, and 15th Sundays after Trinity (5th, 12th, and 19th of September) and the marriage ensue perhaps on the Monday after the last date, namely, September 20, in the church at Frohna. The day of my arrival and that of your dear mother would be, if you accept my suggestion, God willing, on the 15th or 16th of September. The enclosed letter, addressed to my dear brother-in-law, contains the request to publish the banns on the suggested days and to perform the marriage ceremony; I beg you, however, not to deliver this letter to my brother-in-law before you can also announce to him that you have given me your dear yes.

I am almost surprised at myself for daring, in this first letter, to speak so freely of betrothal, of publishing the banns, of marriage, etc.; how much more will you perhaps be astonished! May you, however, recognize this as nothing else than my whole-hearted confidence in you, that you will not, even if you cannot give me your hand, begrudge me the privilege of having at least vividly imagined myself in the position of seeing you as my gracious, without my merit or worthiness, God-given, dearly beloved bride!

Now, may all my wishing and hoping be commended to the hands of God and to the guidance of His love and grace! May He give you a joyous decision and then make your heart firm, sure, and certain that you rest in His grace and under His holy benevolence; and if God brings us together, may we mutually serve Him day and night, without interruption, faithfully, until death by the power of His omnipotent grace in Christ Jesus, your and my Savior. Amen.

Please give my hearty greetings to dear Ernst<sup>2</sup> and Lyddie<sup>3</sup> and tell them that I hope to see them very soon if God wills.

Your daily intercessor with God,

*Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther*

MY MOST PRECIOUS, MOST DEARLY BELOVED,  
GOD-GIVEN BETROTHED:

I received your dear letter Sunday after church at Altenburg. I was very happy to hear from my folks — my brother Ernst was not there, and I thought that the letter was from my dear brother Fritz — but when I opened it, I found it to be from you.

I was at first a little shocked by the contents of your precious letter — it came so unexpectedly — but I did not neglect to resign myself into the faithful hands of the heavenly

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<sup>2</sup> Dr. Ernst Buenger.

<sup>3</sup> Miss Lydia Buenger.

Father, who will also lead and guide me in this serious affair, and may He show me His holy will, which has decided nothing except that which brings us blessings. The heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who is my *Brautwerber*, have convinced me that it is the will of the Lord. Therefore I give you my yes, and say that I am willing to be your wife.

May also the Triune God lend His yea and Amen to our union, since your dear mother and my dear mother have no objections, for which I am all the more happy. Yes, I love you, my beloved betrothed, with all my heart, and on all the earth there is now nothing more dear to me than you, because now I am convinced that God has given me to you out of pure grace, without any merit on my part. Also here I well see how God's Word is being fulfilled, how He as a true Father cares for the forsaken orphans of His own children, and how He provides for them when His time and hour have come. If He gives sorrows, then again He gives joys. May the Lord thus lead both of us through sorrows and joys to heaven, where we can together praise and thank Him for everything He has done for us. Thus I believe that with the help of the Holy Spirit I can live with you happily, blessedly, and God-pleasingly in this intimate union which is indissoluble unto death. I was concerned about the fact that I am so old and that I would be but a very poor servant for you, who would be unworthy of you; but since you had no concern about this, and since God has guided things thus, this [concern] has left me. My temperament, my faith, my shortcomings and weaknesses, are well known to you, and therefore it is not necessary to

go into detail. Every day I pray to God that He would grant me to desist from all impropriety. I believe and hope assuredly that God Almighty will keep both of us in His grace until death and that He will not remove His hand from us, for which both of us will want to pray together day and night.

I am satisfied with everything which you consider good and right, but the announcement [of the marriage] and the wedding seem a bit rushed to me, and I would have desired to postpone it a little; but since you, my heartily beloved betrothed, have already designated the Sundays for the announcement and for the wedding, I am satisfied with it, and it pleases me very much that the banns are to be published and that I am to be married in Frohna by the Rev. Keyl, who was always concerned about me in such a fatherly way. The Pastor and your dear sister [Keyl's wife] were surprised by the news as much as I was, but they were happy about it, especially your dear sister. May God be with us also during this period of our betrothal that it may be a God-sanctified time for me, in which I will daily plead with God in prayer for you. I have entirely submitted myself to God, and He will also, through our Lord Jesus Christ, bless both in body and in soul this step which we have taken with Him. May the Lord keep you healthy and, if it be His will, bring you and my dear mother safely to us on the 15th or 16th of September. I am especially happy to have you with us soon. I suppose it is not possible that dear Sister Agnes can come along, and no doubt it will be painful for her — but I would be very happy if all my brothers and sisters could be here. I beg you to

greet my dear brother Fritz many times, and I still intend to write to my mother's sisters. My brother Ernst and Liddy send their regards. I hope you will not hold it against me that I have written so frankly and at such length, but I was not able to break off sooner; and that I am so free in writing to my betrothed, who is betrothed to me by God, and to address him as such; but I could not do otherwise than write to you in this manner, even though it is the first letter which I write to you. May God take us into His almighty protection, and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be and remain with us. Amen.

Loving you most sincerely,

Your betrothed,

*Emily Buenger*

Perry County, August 17, 1841

WALTHER'S LETTER TO HIS SON-IN-LAW  
ON THE DEATH OF HIS BELOVED EMILIE

St. Louis, Mo., Aug. 30, 1885

MY DEARLY BELOVED STEPHANUS:

Just now Ferdinand<sup>1</sup> left to return home to Brunswick. It is now about time that I impart to you, my loved ones in Port Richmond, some information about the sickness, death, and funeral of our precious Mother.

The sickness, probably a result of a cold she caught after taking a bath on a cool night, started with a violent heart cramp. This was followed for weeks by the most terrible

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<sup>1</sup> Walther's son.

difficulties in breathing, so that she was unable to sleep day or night, except for short intervals. During these difficulties in breathing it was a constant conflict between life and death, for it always seemed to her as if in the next instant she would no longer be able to breathe and as if she would suffocate. Her agony was great. Day and night she would sigh, groan, and moan: "O Lord Jesus, help me! O my most precious Savior, have mercy on me!" In this manner she would pray incessantly. Often she would complain: "Oh, I simply cannot endure it any longer." But not once did she utter an impatient word or show an impatient look. She lay on her bed of pain as patient as a sacrificial lamb. Dr. Bosse, an excellent, experienced, conscientious, and sympathetic physician, did not dare to give her an opiate to provide rest for her, since he feared just that would force her into her final sleep. But as her pain and agony became constantly worse, Dr. Bosse finally administered an opiate and the other usual measures anyway. This at last had the result that our good Mother was suddenly freed of all difficulty in breathing and of all pain, so that she cried out after the first sleep of several hours: "It is as if I were in heaven!" At this time, however, such a terrible and veritable burning and glowing fever set in, which would not yield to any medicines, that talking became constantly more difficult for her, and finally during the last few days she no longer had the strength to talk at all. It seemed, however, as if all pain had left her and as if, on account of her weak condition, she did not feel the burning fever. As often as I would lean over her face, she would regularly and, I would say, almost secretly begin to smile. This she con-

tinued up to her death. The doctor had soon noticed that the disease had attacked her kidneys also, since her water, which the doctor tested chemically every day, contained albumin. She became weaker and weaker all the time, till a week ago today her consciousness seemed to be getting constantly weaker. Till then she had repeated audibly everything prayed for her or said to her. It was very comforting to see and to hear how she constantly occupied and consoled herself with the Word of God. That she would have to die she knew very soon, and she was joyfully prepared to depart in the name of her Lord Jesus and then to be with Him eternally. Spiritual assailments she did not have at all. She believed firmly that for Christ's sake all her sins were forgiven and that she would be saved. As she again suffered heavy attacks the night of Friday to Saturday, I gave her Communion after her confession and absolution. From Saturday evening on the doctor gave her no more medicine. Early Sunday the doctor declared that her time of departure had come, but that the struggle for life might be protracted till Monday. But God heard our crying. On Sunday afternoon her breathing gradually became weaker and in the last hour gentler, till finally her precious soul departed, softly and quietly, so that we did not know for a short while whether she had fallen asleep or was still awake. Mrs. Lange, Mrs. Tschirpe, and the widowed wife of Pastor Buenger served her faithfully, to her last breath, for which the patient always gave them an angelic smile; and also Catherine and her nurse, really a dear woman. But do not let this description of her last suffering depress you too much. God has in this crucible of misery made her as select as gold and silver. Like a heroine



she fought and conquered gloriously. Her faith, her love, her patience has been found genuine by God. Her suffering, as great as it was, is not worthy to be compared with the glory which she beyond all doubt now enjoys. Her mouth is now full of rejoicing, and her tongue full of praise. We have a longing for her, but she not for us. She is secure, but we are yet in danger. We still fight and run, she rests and triumphs. Her memory will be a blessed one as long as there are people alive who knew her. Enemies she did not have, for nobody experienced any evil at her hand, and she was polite and benevolent to everybody. My tears naturally flowed freely, for it is inexpressible just how great a loss I sustained in the departure of my faithful helpmeet. But the more I think of it that, next to God, she lived and worked for me day and night, the more I am glad that she has received her rest and that her works follow her. Oh, if only I had honored her more than I did in the rush of my official duties! That humbles me very much; yet her loving glances at me have been a comforting absolution for me. Oh, how I am looking forward to seeing her again soon!

Last Wednesday we deposited her tired body in its last resting place, as you already know. Stoeckhardt<sup>2</sup> delivered a good funeral sermon for her on Acts 16:13-15, and portrayed her as a believing and pious Lydia. The funeral attendance was large. The church could not hold the multitude. More than 70 carriages and chaises followed in the train after her flower-bedecked coffin, which was carried by the professors and the local pastors.

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<sup>2</sup> Dr. G. Stoeckhardt, his pastor (Holy Cross Church, St. Louis) and colleague on the faculty of Concordia Seminary.

You can imagine how it must have hurt us that none of you, my dear ones, were able to do the last honors to the deceased. If there would still have been time, after we received your telegram, to summon you to the funeral on Thursday, we would have postponed it till this very day. But enough of this. I do not with my words want to make your hearts still heavier, which are undoubtedly already too heavy. Unfortunately also Julia<sup>3</sup> was not able to come, but only her dear husband. Likewise Ferdinand and Constantine<sup>4</sup> did not receive the last telegram in time, so that when they came, they did not yet have any news of the blessed departure of their mother.

Probably Julia will be well enough by late fall so that she and Lenchen<sup>5</sup> can visit and comfort me, a poor and forsaken widower.

It is very advantageous for me now that I have Catherine, who has already served us 14 years and who is able to carry on in housekeeping the same way my sainted wife, a God-given helpmeet, used to do it.

Give your dear children my regards. I will not send souvenirs right away. When my daughters come, they may themselves select and take what they want.

Severely struck by God, but bowing under His divine dispensation,

Your

*C. F. W. Walther*

*P. S.* Forgive me that this hastily written letter reaches you so late.

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<sup>3</sup> Walther's daughter, wife of the Rev. J. H. Niemann.

<sup>4</sup> Another son of Walther.

<sup>5</sup> Walther's daughter, Keyl's wife.

(Translated by Roy Suellflow)

PORTION OF A LETTER TO THE  
REV. STEPHANUS KEYL

This letter was written during a visit of Mrs. St. Keyl and  
her children in St. Louis

St. Louis, August 4, 1866

Little Emily parades around the whole day, with the exception of the noon hour, when she loves to rest from her governmental cares, sleeping by preference upon the carpet



*Stephanus Keyl*

of the guest chamber, with a pillow under her head, in the shade of the great house with its ornamental trees, as if the entire jurisdiction of Concordia were given over to her administration. Her energy has already attained a certain fame in the child world of the entire neighborhood. True, besides great amiableness she has a considerable measure of that

strength of character, which, without doing violence to language, one might also call self-will. But she has already noticed, after her brief stay in these regions, that there are still powers above her, which are able to use the acacias with the beautiful twigs for other than shade purposes. True, it has hitherto only been necessary to show her one of these twigs without any further use being made of it; but I have been compelled to raise my bass voice out of the

## EXCERPTS FROM WALTHER'S LETTERS AND WRITINGS

study window when the little hoiden absolutely aimed to carry out her will as the highest law of the house. Nevertheless she is more intimate with no one than with her grandpapa; for he allows her many innocent things which Mother is not disinclined to refuse her. I have only to show myself, and she runs to meet me, her face beaming with joy.

Dear little Theodorchén is also the pet of all. He is such a sweet child that he cannot possibly save himself from kisses. Always friendly, he only laments when he, as it seems to me, suffers from teething. There is never a lack of arms and hands to carry him. Grandmother would like very much to teach him to eat in order to spare his mother, but this seems to be the hardest of lessons for him. He appears to hold to the apostolical "I have fed you with milk and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able"; and, I believe, rightly so; for the basis of this spiritual sense certainly is the natural truth that little children should have mother's milk.

## WALTHER'S MESSAGE TO YOUNG PEOPLE

O my young people, God wants our whole life. He desires not the dregs of our old age only, but also the beading wine [the enthusiasm] of our youth.

He would have us place upon His altar not only the sear and withered leaves of the autumn of our lives, but also the swelling buds and the fragrant blossoms of the smiling springtime of life.

He asks us to be His, not when we are become bent and broken, unable to enjoy the pleasures of this world any

longer, when we are tired of sinning, and the lust of the world palls us, but already when we are young, when we come to the parting of the ways where sin caressingly invites us to enjoy her charms; even then He would have us renounce sin, place our hands in His, and pledge Him our hearts, saying:

"Thou, O Lord, shalt be the Master of my young life also. Thee will I love, Thee will I serve, unto Thee shall my heart beat, and Thou shalt possess it altogether."

### WALTHER ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORK

And so the young people are happily at work. Convinced of the benefits and blessings of such societies by their own experience, they hope that similar organizations may be established in other places. For this reason they appeared before the last sessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, expressing the wish that Synod would encourage the formation of such societies in its congregations. It is the purpose of these lines to help give this encouragement. May they be well received and be accompanied by blessing! . . . As soon as there is love for, and interest in, this work, all difficulties will be overcome. What joy there would be if here and there such a society would be established! What enthusiasm this would create! What blessings this would bring, inwardly and outwardly! Up, Christian youths, and start! Do not hesitate! Do not wait until your numbers have increased! Organize, so that you may increase!

WALTHER ON AMERICA

Address delivered in a meeting of a young people's society  
July 4, 1853

There are innumerable advantages and boons by virtue of which our fatherland surpasses all other countries and which have been showered upon it especially since the memorable Declaration of Independence. I would be worse than blind if I could not see them. The country that we have chosen as our new home stands before our eyes and the eyes of an admiring world as the greatest miracle of the century—a tree grown high beyond comparison, laden with thousands of golden fruits of human industry, and at the same time covered by uncounted developing blossoms that promise to bear without interruption new fruits of human endeavor. Under its protecting, wide-spreading branches ever-increasing multitudes from all tongues and nations are gathering . . . a conflux of people from all tribes, who here exchange their talents and experiences. Thus the gifts and attainments of all nations are brought together here to make a nation happy.



*Dr. H. C. Schwan*  
President of Missouri Synod  
1878—1899

Thrice blessed may this day be! On it the foundation of a state was laid in which freedom of religion and conscience has been made a principle of government. Blessed be this land in which we enjoy this freedom! As this country offers civil freedom to religion, so may religion bring to it heavenly blessings! Only let us make use of this freedom faithfully; for God will ask us to give strict account of this unutterably great gift. As citizens, however, of this country let us work zealously, fight bravely, and, if need be, shed our blood cheerfully that this country may remain a free country and above all retain the golden crown of its freedom, namely, religious liberty, and thus be and remain a refuge for all that are exiled for religion's sake from all nations of the world.

May the Lord of nations, who until now so manifestly ruled over, and blessed, this nation, let His face henceforth graciously shine over our North American Free States; confound all attacks which the enemies of this Union of States may make upon its freedom; rear in this land, to His glory, a pious, free, and happy people; and always place at its head virtuous men of wisdom and of fearless and strong action! Hail to thee, America! Hail! Hail!

### ON PURE DOCTRINE

From the sermon delivered upon the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Missouri Synod at the Jubilee Convention in St. Louis, 1872

But if to receive and retain the truth of God's Word has ever been beyond human reason and strength, then this surely was the case at the time of the founding of our

Synod, and it has been such throughout the period of its existence. Those who twenty-five years ago organized this Synod grew up under the influence of Rationalism and heterodoxy [in Germany]; and most of them were enmeshed in the unbelief of their day or at least in various false teachings. Now, how did it come about that in that awful time, when the voice of truth was almost silenced, all these young men were delivered from error, led to perceive the truth, and to make one and the same avowal to abide by the truth, without wavering, unto their last breath? Again, what happened when our Synod began to give testimony to the pure truth? From that very moment on to this day our Synod has had to battle ceaselessly with old and new enemies of our Church, who seem to have gathered here from all parts of the world into one vast army. We have had to battle with the unbelief and the mockery of our day, which under the cry of freedom and progress seeks utterly to destroy religion and morals, Church and State, all divine and human ordinances. We have had to battle with the spirit of religious unionism, which is pervading all Christendom like a pest, throttling at its very inception all love for pure truth. We have had to battle with the fanaticism of enthusiastic sects. We have battled with the impertinent assumptions of an Antichristian Papacy, which is growing ever bolder and bolder. We have battled with a new-type Lutheranism, which has been corrupted through rationalistic, unionistic, sectarian, and Romanizing teachings, principles, laws, and practices. Yes, we have had to contend with false spirits in our own midst. How, then, did it come to pass that our Synod, amid such conflicts, under



ceaseless bitter attacks and lurking temptations, yet like a frail tempest-tossed vessel, was not wrecked, but kept her course, having now for a quarter of a century continued unwaveringly in the old doctrine of the old true Church? I ask, How was this brought to pass?

Ah, surely, that was not the result of our penetrative insight nor the reward of our fidelity; that was the free gift of Him of whom it is written: "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence," 1 Cor. 1:26-29. What? May we not, shall we not, must we not, therefore this day rejoice and give thanks to God, praise and glorify Him?

Yet now I seem to hear all our enemies saying sneeringly: "Yes, yes, '*reine Lehre*,' 'pure doctrine,' 'orthodoxy,' — that's it, and that's all you glory in. Vainglory!" But my brethren, let them mock us if they will; by such mockery they reveal of what manner of spirit they are. Surely theirs is a different spirit from David's, who, after beseeching God not to take the Word of Truth from his mouth, at once added: "For I have hoped in Thy judgments." These judgments, these pronouncements of God, in other words, this pure doctrine of the divine Word, that was the only hope of his soul.

And so has it ever been with all the true children and servants of God. For what is *reine Lehre*? Pure doctrine is the pure Word of God, the pure Bread of Life eternal, the pure seed of the children of the Kingdom, a pure fountain of faith and love, a pure well of divine comfort, in a word, the clean, sure, and straight way to Christ and into heaven. Truly, pure doctrine, then, is more precious than silver and gold, sweeter than honey and the honeycomb, stronger than sin, death, devil, and hell, more than heaven and earth. And pure doctrine is never an idle or a dead thing; from it, and from it alone, flows spiritual, Christian, divine life. Even among the sects, what spiritual life there is, is the fruit only of pure doctrine so far as it is taught; all errors among them are merely germinating seeds of a spiritual and eternal death. Wherever there is purity of doctrine, there will be found miracles of divine grace, according to the divine promise: "The Word that goeth forth out of My mouth shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

#### WALTHER ON "OBEDIENCE TO THE MINISTRY"

Reverence and implicit obedience are due the ministry when the pastor teaches God's Word. But he is no ruler in the church; therefore he has no authority to make new laws, to institute ceremonies in the church arbitrarily, and to pronounce the *ban* alone, without the previous knowledge of the whole congregation. From Matt. 20:25-26 and 1 Pet. 5:1-3 "we see that the Church of Jesus Christ is not a kingdom consisting of rulers and subjects, but one great

holy brotherhood, in which none can rule or wield power. Just as little, however, as the necessary equality [among the Christians, on the one hand, annuls the obedience] which they render their pastors when they bring the Word of Jesus Christ to their attention — for when they obey their pastors in this case, they do not obey men, but Christ Himself — just as certainly, on the other hand, the equality of the believers would be annulled and the church transformed into a worldly state if a pastor were to demand obedience also when he advances what he deems good and expedient, upon his personal intelligence alone, without proof from the Word of Christ, who is his Lord and Head as well as that of all Christians. As soon therefore as the church deals with matters indifferent, *i. e.*, such things as the Word of God neither demands nor forbids, *the pastor must never demand implicit obedience* for that which to him seems best; for in such a case, more than ever, it is the business of the whole congregation, of the pastor together with the hearers, to decide what is to be accepted and what is to be rejected.

### ON FREQUENT CHANGING OF PASTORS AND TEACHERS

From a letter to Dr. H. C. Schwan, Cleveland, Ohio,  
dated March 7, 1864

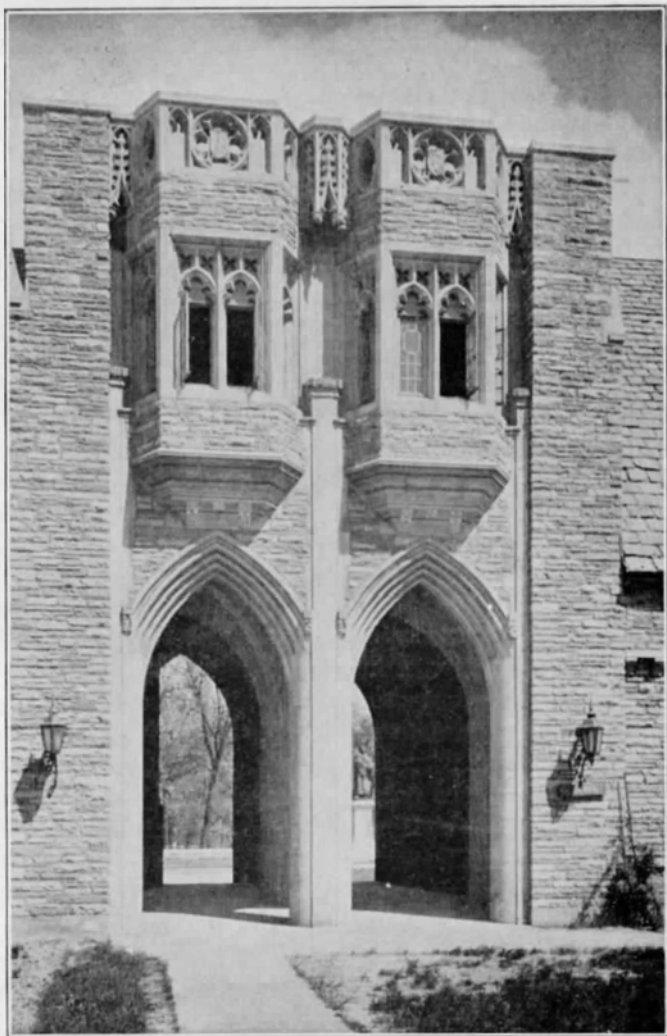
A real pity is the constant calling away of pastors and teachers. If that continues, both our congregations and our ministers will deteriorate. It is foolish to believe that, if at one place ten or twenty more people belong to a congregation, God for this reason immediately wants a min-

ister there who at his present place has so many fewer members. By frequent changes surely more will be torn down than one can thereby hope to build up elsewhere.

### ON THE DUTY OF THE MINISTER IN TIME OF WAR

From a letter to Rev. J. C. W. Lindemann, Cleveland, Ohio,  
dated April 27, 1861

Since the Apostle says: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers," Rom. 13:1, the preacher must be subject to the government, and as it has the sword, that is, the right to wage war, first, for the purpose of defense, secondly, to execute vengeance, thirdly, to regain conquered territory or jurisdiction, the preacher also must be subject to it if he receives the command to go to war. A Christian-spirited government or also a sensible one will not require this; but if it does, then also the "froward" (1 Pet. 2:18) must be obeyed. However, I believe, that a minister has not only the privilege, but also the duty, if he realizes that he may be called to arms, to petition the respective authorities to excuse him, setting forth in his petition that he can be of greater service to the state if he admonishes and instructs his congregation to be loyal and if he comforts the widows and orphans than if he were personally active on the battlefield. [Then after bringing a quotation from John Gerhard, the great Lutheran dogmatician of the seventeenth century, Walther adds:] This Gerhard says of a Christian state; how much more would he wish that a minister should not set himself in opposition to the call of a non-Christian government and thus place himself under the suspicion that he is



PHOTOGRAPHED BY SIGURD FISCHER

*Walther Arch*

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Dedicated 1926

willing to enjoy the protection of the state, but not to fulfill his patriotic duty like others, as if therefore the Christian religion were only a burden to the state, aye, a dangerous parasitical plant.

I write this to you with a bleeding heart. For it is altogether possible that you may be ordered to shoot us to death here [in St. Louis]. But God's Word must be obeyed!

### ON THE IMPORTANCE OF MISSIONS IN LARGE CITIES

From a letter to O. Fuerbringer, dated February 25, 1850, in which Walther refers to a request by G. A. Schieferdecker to preach a trial sermon in Louisville, Ky.

As I recognized the importance of this matter, I urged him to grasp this opportunity to bear testimony to the truth in the beautiful metropolis of Louisville. We have been endeavoring, at great effort and expense, to gain entrance in the large cities, but mostly in vain; here, unsought, a door is opened to us in one of the best-situated cities in the United States; and this dare and must not happen in vain. Schieferdecker allowed himself to be persuaded and traveled to Louisville. He was received joyfully. His sermons made a good impression.

### ON INFLATION

From a letter to Rev. F. Brunn, Steeden, Germany,  
dated May, 1864

We do really feel the consequences of the war severely in this respect, that the matriculation of new students in

our Practical Seminary has almost ceased altogether; for the young people are becoming more and more indispensable in all households. We do not lack money; for the whole country is living on so gigantic an inflation as perhaps no other country in the world. But how will it be if some day the whole structure, built on sand, falls to the ground? Then will certainly follow upon this imaginary glory a need so fearful and real as America has never before experienced. [Author's note: The depression that came in the '70's proved the truth of Walther's prediction.]

## A FEW OF WALTHER'S POEMS

### TO MY WIFE ON HER BIRTHDAY

The following lines were attached to a new dress which Walther gave to his wife on one of her birthdays

Here is a dress, my precious sweet,  
It is my gift to you,  
In joy and sorrow always meet  
For one so sweet and true;  
It's small enough, and modest, too,  
The gift your eye does see,  
But with it goes my heart anew,  
Which loves you ardently.  
So take it and believe me, dear,  
Though dresses will grow old,  
My love for you from year to year  
Will gleam like purest gold.

But look not on the gift alone  
I offer you this day;  
For with it goes, my dearest one,  
A wish for life's far way.  
For as I tender you this dress,  
I ask the Lord on high  
To grant me in His graciousness  
The boon for which I cry:

As in your Baptism's holy stream  
You put the Savior on,  
May He abide, for peace supreme,  
With you your whole life long;  
And may He deck you with the dress —  
The best gift of the soul —  
Of His own perfect righteousness,  
Your fairest aureole!



The dress is of a scarlet hue  
Which on this day you wear;  
Oh, let it tell me, dear, that you  
Will truly love me e'er,  
That as on our glad wedding day  
Your heart still beats for me  
And I with happy joy may say:  
My dear you'll always be!

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER, *tr.*

WORDS OF COMFORT

Addressed to sorrowing friends on the occasion of the death  
of their young daughter

"In Jesus' wounds my sleep I take,"  
Your dying darling daughter spake;  
With that she entered into rest  
In Jesus' fold, forever blest.

With blood divine the Shepherd bought  
His precious lamb; His mercy sought  
Her soul. And then He bade her come  
To dwell with Him in heaven's home.

He saw some peril lurking nigh,  
And so from His great throne on high  
He looked on her with pitying love  
And called her to His grace above.

He said: "Come quickly, lamb of Mine;  
I bear you up on arms divine,  
Where angels wait to sing with you,  
In heaven's garden ever new."

On pastures green the Shepherd leads  
His ransomed lamb and ever feeds  
Its soul with joy by waters still  
And keeps it from all harm and ill.

Then weep not, you who loved her so,  
But look to heaven, where, we know,  
Forever with the joyous throng  
She sings her sweet immortal song.

Have childlike faith, such faith as she  
Herself did have. Then you will see  
In God's own day with radiant eyes  
Your darling child in paradise.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER, *tr.*

## THE CHRISTIAN WEDLOCK

The Christian wedlock is alike the seasons,  
Beginning in fair Spring's bellflowered lea;  
There sprouteth hope, well nursed by quickening reasons,  
There bloom sweet joys, presaging fruit to be.

The Christian wedlock is alike the seasons,  
Its progress is in Summer's sunny vale;  
With cooling wafts and timely showers' easings,  
The heat intense ripens golden fruit and hale.

The Christian wedlock is alike the seasons,  
Its going out in Autumn's harvest home.  
'Tis then God in His wine press of afflictions  
Brings forth the wine of joy that lights our gloam.

The Christian wedlock is alike the seasons,  
Its end is hoary Winter's icy frost;  
The sacred lifelong tie is rent. God reasons  
A happiness of Life, beyond that lost.

May then, beloved pair, your nuptial blessings  
Be fair Spring's charms, then Summer's ardent ray  
And harvest home; and may life's sore distressings  
Turn into cooling shade at ebb of day.

And when, mid tinted glow of Autumn's dying,  
Experience, rich and blest, hath ripened in love,  
There sprouteth under Winter's snow so trying  
The evergreen of blessed life above.

H. A. POLACK, *tr.*

HE'S RISEN, HE'S RISEN

He's risen, He's risen, Christ Jesus, our Lord;  
He burst death's dark prison, the incarnate Word.  
Break forth, hosts of heaven, in jubilant song,  
And, earth, sea, and mountain, the paean prolong.

The Foe boasts in triumph when on Calvary  
The Lord of Creation is nailed to the tree;  
In hell's dark domain Satan's hosts shout and jeer,  
For Jesus is slain, whom these evil ones fear.

But short was their triumph; the Savior arose,  
And hell, death, and Satan He vanquished, His foes.  
The conquering Lord waves His banner on high;  
He lives, yea, He lives, and will nevermore die.

O where is thy sting, Death? We fear thee no more;  
Christ rose, and now open is fair Eden's door.  
For all our transgressions His blood does atone;  
Redeemed and forgiven, we now are His own.

Then sing your hosannas and raise your glad voice;  
Proclaim the best tidings that all may rejoice.  
Laud, honor, and praise to the Lamb that was slain,  
Who sitteth in glory and ever shall reign!

ANNA M. MEYER, *tr.*